

THE ENTRY OF THE
JEW
INTO FRENCH SOCIETY
AND THE CHRISTIAN STATES

BY
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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

ÉDOUARD LEHMANN (1836–1915) and his twin brother Achille (1836–1909) were born racial Jews in the city of Lyon on the 18TH of February, 1836. Their family was prosperous and influential; they enjoyed the status of a privileged community in one of the world's greatest states. An unexpected calamity occurred when, upon reaching the age of eighteen, the twins fled from the Jewish community and converted to Catholicism. Édouard took the baptismal name JOSEPH, Achille became Augustin, and they Francized their surname as LÉMANN. The brothers entered seminary and were ordained priests in 1860.

The brothers were prolific authors on historical and religious topics, especially regarding the historical situation of the Jews. They co-authored the statement *Postulatum pro Hebraeis* for the Vatican Council of 1870, but the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War suspended the proceedings before this document was formally affirmed.

Pius

In addition to their priestly duties, they organized charity work such as orphanages and religious houses for women. Their primary historical significance sits on

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

How the Israelites entered modern society, and became its members, is almost entirely unknown. The precise details of this entry are virtually unknown. They are loosely linked to the Revolution of 1789, and leave it at that.

The French nation had the generosity to open up the avenues of society to them; after that, it didn't worry about the results.

By the time it was realized that the Jews were citizens, they were already, in part, the masters.

Lightness thus bred ignorance in a matter of exceptional gravity.

Pride, alas, may also have played its part. Inconceivably, two gigantic phenomena have been before everyone's eyes in recent years: the growing preponderance of the Jewish race and the sad crisis of Christian states. But few people think of examining the causes of this contrast. They even seem afraid to seek them out, for fear of having to condemn principles of error that have become dear to a superb society.

Let a son of Israel, welcomed into the city of light, the holy Church of God, be allowed to set out the truth, the whole truth, in this matter; he will be careful not to separate it from mercy, because he himself needed it!

*Veritatem dico, non mentior.*¹ Nothing has been neglected on our part to be able to tell the truth. We went to the source. Divine providence has led us to discover precious, original and completely unpublished documents. Twenty years have been devoted to gathering them, and studying them in themselves and in the light of contemporary events. By delivering these pages to the public, we will teach the Israelites themselves how their entry into French and universal society was accomplished.

As a statement of historical truth, this book will, by the same token, be a tribute of gratitude. The Israelites, today free, peaceful

1 Saint Paul; I Timothy 2:7.

and honored, do not know the full extent of the benefits they owe to the good King Louis XVI, who was the first to pave the way for their civil emancipation. We are happy to think that many noble hearts among them will welcome with surprise and happiness the revelation of the King's benefits.

But this book addresses another explanation: that of the mysterious problem of the social elevation of the people of Israel and the trials of the Nations. The strange so-called revolutionary movement which, by raising the Israelites, brings down the Christian states, is studied here in its most secret causes. Any loyal mind, misled by the ideas of the day, will understand, with regard to the Jewish question, what it may not have suspected: what a capital and disastrous mistake the Nations have made in getting rid of the maternal, discreet and prudent cooperation of the Catholic Church, and in substituting *their famous rights of man* for the ancient Christian law that governed them. They themselves then opened the breach through which the Jews passed and became sovereigns.

Fortunately, in His inexhaustible mercy towards societies and individuals alike, the Almighty brings good out of evil. If He allowed the faults of the Nations and the entry of Israel into civil society, it was obviously to bring about a more perfect order of things: for God follows that glorious path which consists, as Saint Thomas Aquinas so aptly put it, in going ceaselessly from *the less perfect to the more perfect*. Christian nations, who, from living as you were, seem to be dying, people of Israel, who, from dead as you were, seem to be living again, in death or in life, you will find someone waiting for you: the Christ of God! An indestructible cornerstone, placed at the center of centuries and worlds to unite everything, He harmonizes contrasts and brings extremes closer together: He will reunite you!

That's why we've written for Him!

II

When the prophets of Israel, enlightened from on high as to the coming and the characters of the Messiah, enlightened equally as to the future blindness of their nation, uttered their prophecies, they

were so inconsolable at the infidelity that was being prepared, so filled with patriotism, that they did not separate themselves from their guilty homeland, and, though faithful, though enlightened and holy, they said words like these: *We were waiting for light, and here we are in darkness. We go like the blind, touching the walls; we grope as if we had no eyes. We collide at high noon; we are in dark dens like the dead. We all roar like bears. We sigh and moan like doves. We hoped for salvation, and salvation is far from us; for our iniquities are multiplied, and our sins bear witness against us.*² How touching is this way of saying! The holy prophets of Israel could not bring themselves to separate their cause from the rest of the nation; inconsolable at its blindness and general misfortune, they spoke as if they were part of it!

Imitating the piety of our fathers from afar, we have placed ourselves in the midst of our ancient co-religionists in our narrative, especially when it comes to bemoaning their darkness or recounting their misfortunes.

An ambition, also due to divine charity, will reveal itself in these pages: that of helping to reunite the two peoples of God, the Catholic people and the Israelite people. What an era of greatness and prosperity would dawn on the world if these two peoples could unite! They alone survive all changes.

“Both have sown the truth, and that is why they are immortal; prodigious peoples, they alone trace a splendid line, a luminous furrow whose end is nowhere to be seen: out of God, they return to God; out of eternity, they return to eternity; and in their swift movement, in their invincible race, they illuminate spaces and majestically push back behind them the waves of time.”³ What a pity for mankind that they have, until now, pursued their careers separated from each other. Is not the kingdom of God waiting for them to join hands at last? After all teachings have been put to the test in the melee of the nations, and the intermediate religions have succumbed, only total truth and total error, Christianity and atheism, God alone and man alone, will remain opposite each other. Then, with no cloud between the two chosen peoples, between the Jew and the Christian, between the people of the past and the people of the future, they will see each other from the ends of the

2 Isaiah 59.

3 *Œuvres* of DONOSO CORTÈS, t. II, p. 512.

universe; they will stare at each other, and, having recognized each other, they will set out like two giants to embrace each other.”⁴

Our pages carry this hope in their folds.

As we think with delight of this fraternal union, we think in our hearts,⁵ and our thoughts will certainly have retained something of this passage to the heart. May this imprint be a further token that we have spoken the truth! For it is prejudice, antipathy and hatred that distort the historian’s judgment. Love, which enlarges the heart, makes the eye clearer! In writing history, as in healing wounds, he can say: *Love has given its word that it is also the truth.*

Lyon, December 15TH, 1885.

4 LACORDAIRE, tenth lecture “*on Scripture.*”

5 Ecclesiastes 2:3.

BOOK ONE

THE BENEFITS AND PRECAUTIONS OF
LOUIS XVI TOWARDS THE JEWS; PRELUDE
TO THEIR ENTRY INTO SOCIETY

CHAPTER I

THE TERRIBLE CUSTOM OF BODY TOLLS ABOLISHED BY LOUIS XVI (1784)

I

ISRAEL'S OPPROBRIUM FOR EIGHTEEN CENTURIES.

We had showered the righteous with contempt. We put a mantle of derision on his shoulders, a crown of thorns on his head, a reed in his hand. Blows, spitting, insults, conspiracies, disgrace of every kind had been lavished on him; nothing of opprobrium had been spared him by us. And, as a final trait, when it came to buying him for money to put him to death, we considered him a vile being: thirty denarii!

These opprobrious acts have been repeated ever since, as punishment and retribution, in the life of the Jewish people. The Jewish people have never lacked anything in the way of misery and sorrow. Who would dare to ignore it? An unfortunate people, yet we know not how to pity them! wrote Saint Jerome. A reflection that seems mild compared to the judgment pronounced by our great lawgiver himself, by Moses: You will be like the fable and the laughingstock of all the peoples to whom the Lord will have led you.⁶ To have become the fable and the laughingstock of the universe, when you had been the people of God, you must surely have committed a great crime!

With history in hand, let's catalog some of the humiliating afflictions that have made us the laughingstock of other peoples. This will better highlight, through a contrast that has not yet been established, Louis XVI's benefits to us, and his mission of mercy.

We enumerate without elaborating. For example:

a) The sale of the Jews as cattle at a fair, after the ruin of Jerusalem. We had sold the Just for 50 denarii: at the fair of Terebinth,

50 Jews were given away for 1 denarii.⁷

b) For centuries, Jews were forbidden to come and weep over the ruins of Jerusalem. Poor Jewish visitors were turned away with harshness and contempt. However, they were allowed to do so only one day a year. But then we had to pay for our tears, and buy dearly the right to watch and weep from the top of a hill.⁸

c) The exclusion of Jews from the ranks of society, everywhere. We were less than lepers.... But didn't we regard Him as a leper?⁹

d) The bellows that, in Toulouse, Béziers and elsewhere, a deputy of the Jewish community was obliged to receive publicly.... on Good Friday.¹⁰

e) The rouelle or yellow star. This was a piece of yellow cloth on our chests, or a horn of the same color on our hats, so that, from a distance, anyone could see us and say: "That's a Jew3!

f) Separate quarters or "juiveries", narrow, inadequate and often filthy alleys where our families were kept apart and crammed together.

g) The obligation, in certain cities, to pay a sort of Peer they breathed there, as in Augsburg where they paid one florin per hour, and in Bremen one ducat per day.¹¹

h) No public appearances on certain days of the year. We had to hide: almost always, from the evil of Palm Sunday to Easter Day,¹² we seemed to be struck off the list of the living.... But didn't He also cross us off? Didn't we hide His divine face at Caiaphas' house, the better to strike Him, guess who struck you?¹³

i) Insults to the wandering Jew, beatings and all kinds of abuse. "In the East, an Abdallah had Jews branded with a hot iron; a Montakaval forbade them to ride anything other than donkeys or mules; a caliph, El-Achem Allah, had them wear the figure of a calf around

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their necks, because of the one their fathers had worshiped in the desert. Today, in Persia, they are insulted with impunity; in Africa, they are spat at in the streets, and children chase them with stones. In Fez, a day is set aside to receive their taxes in a public square; as each one pays, they are kicked or caned, and read again with a deep bow to the noise of the jeers of the populace. In Turkey, especially in the suburb of Galata, many are porters, but they are forbidden to put a sack of hay under their burdens, as the Tures do. One of these unfortunates had brought Mahomet IV back to Constantinople, lost in the hunt, and as a reward he asked for the freedom to have a sack, and he got it.”¹⁴ - “The Grand Duke Constantine, passing his daily reviews on the Place de Saxe, in Warsaw, when he saw an Israelite, made him pick up the manure from the horses and carry it away in his furry bonnet. He laughed out loud. Not a man could be found to protest against this wretched and despicable abuse.”¹⁵

j) Distrust, the belief in perpetual malice on our part, even in causes that concerned us. “In Le Puy, disputes between two Jews were submitted to altar boys, so that the extreme innocence of the judges would undermine the extreme malice of the litigants.”¹⁶

k) Infamous tortures. A Jew was tortured between two dogs. “In Germany and Switzerland, they were hanged by the feet next to a dog, as a mockery, because the dog is the symbol of fidelity.”¹⁷

l) Permission given to all public officials to use derogatory epithets against Jews, in pleadings, in judicial acts...⁵ But when He was before the courts of Jerusalem, did we not see Him burdened with odious designations, pursuing and vilifying Him even to the Cross?¹⁸

m) Expulsion from certain cities every evening at the sound of the trumpet: “When the trumpet sounded, they were to be ready to leave, and to have left the city by the time the gates were closed.”¹⁹

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n) No bathing in rivers where Christians bathed. "In Provence and Burgundy, they were excluded from public baths, except on Fridays, when these establishments were opened to dancers and prostitutes."²⁰

o) Prohibition of certain promenades, squares and public gardens. Not fifty years ago, in a city in Germany, the following inscription could still be read at the entrance to the public promenade:

Jews and pigs are forbidden to enter here²¹

But what struck us as particularly bitter and painful were the impediments placed in the way of baptism by the seizure of the property of the Jew being baptized. "In effect, a Jew who became a Christian ceased to be subject to the taxes levied on those of his nation; he therefore diminished his lord's fief by the same amount: such an act was forbidden, and the suzerain thought he was compensating for this diminution of fief by seizing all the Jew's possessions. He would then give him back such portion as he saw fit."²² Is this really true?²³

Such were our opprobrium. You could say that there were institutions of contempt for the Jews, a publicly organized contempt.

We were enveloped in this contempt, from head to toe But in Him too, from head to toe, when He was the Man of Sorrows, there wasn't a single place that we left without wounds!²⁴

As Providence in wrath had scattered Israel in all lands, these reproaches were found in one form or another in all countries. They lasted every day of the year for 1,800 years. O Moses, you exaggerated nothing when you announced that we would be the laughing stock of all peoples!

David, too, in his Visions of Christ, foresaw that we would give Him vinegar to drink, and immediately afterwards announced that our backs would be forced to bend.²⁵ His prophecy, like that

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of Moses, was fulfilled to the letter. Our backs have literally bent under the scorn that has been heaped upon us.

O God of justice and mercy, if by accepting these reproaches we can make you forget those with which we had showered your Son, our Messiah, well, we bow our heads and say to you now: Mercy!

II

THE PARTICULAR OPPROBRIUM OF BODILY TOLL.

Of all these outrages and institutions of contempt, perhaps none was more sensitive to the Jews than the bodily toll that likened them to animals.

The toll was a charge levied on every Jew entering a city. The passport they carried contained only the words: such and such a... Jew. And the Jew then paid for his entry, just as he paid for his mount.¹

There were all kinds of tolls. Strangely enough, we were wanderers, no kingdom, no city wanted us as citizens; and yet we couldn't even wander, going from one place to another, without paying for the least of our movements and the air we breathed.

So there were all kinds of tolls. Tolls to get from one town to another, from one province to another. Right of entry, right of exit. In some regions and under certain circumstances, tolls were very high, because we were rich. In others, it was low and humiliating, because we were Jews. As we draw these lines, we have before us two documents relating to the customs of the time; we transcribe :

TOLLS ON THE LAND OF MALEMORT

PAGE

On rafts going down the Durance At a rate of five sols per oar.
pulverization

On each ox and pig, and on each Jew, one sol;

On each trentenier of the same livestock, six sols per trentenier.

On this sheet of tolls for the land of Malemort, we are therefore named... after the ox and pig, and the same tariff.²⁶

SECOND DOCUMENT:

I had," says Denisart in his *Collection de jurisprudence*, "regarded as a popular error the opinion held in France that Jews are subject to a toll like animals; but I have just found the sign of the duties to be paid in Châteauneuf-sur-Loire, printed in 1576, by virtue of a court ruling of March 15, 1558, which reads:

Item, a Jew owes 12 deniers

La juive grosse 9 deniers

A simple Jewess 6 deniers

Item, a dead Jew 5 sols

A dead Jewess 50 deniers²⁷

As a mark of contempt, this bodily toll on Jews was sometimes called the “tax of the cloven foot.”²⁸

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III

LOUIS XVI PUTS AN END TO IT.

Blessed be his memory, it was Louis XVI who put an end to this opprobrium. In January 1784, this good prince issued an edict containing the following words:

“The Jews are subject to a bodily tax which assimilates them to animals; and as it is repugnant to the sentiments which we extend over all our subjects, to allow to subsist with regard to any of them an imposition which seems to debase humanity, we have thought it necessary to abolish it,” etc....

A long cry of gratitude greeted the appearance of this edict among the Israelites. Since the fall of Jerusalem and the fair of Terebinth, where the Jews had been sold like cattle, it was the first time that a breath of rehabilitation and honor had passed over the long-humiliated bones of the old people... and those bones shuddered.²⁹

There was even a delicate circumstance in the abolition of the bodily toll that has been carefully preserved in the book of an Israelite. It was reserved for Louis le Bienfaisant,” recounts the historian, “to abolish the *péage corporel*: a benefit to which the Jews are all the more sensitive as it dates from the rigorous season of 1784, when His Majesty’s kindness was quite occupied with the relief of his poor Christian subjects.”³⁰

During the harsh winter of 1784, a touching double spectacle took place at the city gates. Destitute Christians shed tears of happiness when they saw convoys of food sent to them by the king, by their father. And the poor Jews, too, shed tears of gratitude as they passed through these same gates without being forced to bow their heads and pay like animals. “The king preserves our lives,” cried the Christians; and the Israelites said, “He has restored honor to us!

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NOTE

Here is the full text of Louis XVI's edict:

EDIT FROM THE KING¹

PORTANT EXEMPTION DES DROITS DE PÉAGE COR-
POREL SLR LES JUIFS Du mois de janvier -1784

Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and Navarre: To all present and future; greetings. By the verification of the tolls which we are continuing with care, with a view to freeing commerce from the impediments they bring, as soon as circumstances permit, We have recognized that according to several tariffs and signs of the said tolls, notably in Alsace, and at the entrance to the city of Strasbourg, the Jews are subject to a corporal tax which assimilates them to animals : and as it is repugnant to the sentiments We extend to all our subjects, to allow to subsist, with regard to any of them, an imposition which seems to debase humanity, We have thought it necessary to abolish it. For these and other reasons, in the opinion of our Council, and of our certain Science, full Power and Royal Authority, We have, by our present perpetual and irrevocable edict, said, ruled and ordered; say, rule and order, will and please Us: That in the future Jews be exempt, as We exempt them, in all the extent of our kingdom and countries subject to our obedience, from Corporal Tolls, Travers, Customs, and all other duties of this nature, for their person only, whether the said Rights depend on the Domain of our crown, or whether they belong to towns and communities, to ecclesiastical or secular lords, and other persons without exception, in whatever capacity. We forbid all collectors, clerks or persons in charge of collecting the aforementioned tolls to demand any from Jews, on pain of disobedience, and this notwithstanding all treaties, regulations, tariffs or signs to the contrary, which We have derogated from and do derogate from by the present Edict; reserving the right to rule, as appropriate, on any indemnities that may need to be granted. We hereby give notice to our friends and feudatories holding our Court of Parliament in Nancy :

That our present Edict be read, registered and published, and that its contents be kept, observed and executed according to its form and content; for such is our pleasure, and so that it may be

firm and stable forever, we have put our Seal on it.

Donné à Versailles au mois de Janvier, l'an de grâce mil sept cent quatre-vingt-quatre, et de notre règne le dixième.

signed: LOUIS.

El plus bas:

Poin le Roi, signed: Le Maréchal de Ségur.

Visa: Hce de Miromémi..

Seen by the Council: De Galonné.

Sealed with a large green wax seal, in red and green silk lakes.

CHAPTER II

STRANGE EPISODE OF FORGED RECEIPTS
IN ALSACE JEWISH USURERS, BUT
CHRISTIAN FORGERS (1779-1783) THIS
EPISODE, THE STARTING POINT OF A
NEW ORDER OF THINGS FOR THE JEWS

I

THE PITIFUL STATE OF ALSACE, DEVoured BY JEWISH USURY.

Before highlighting a second of Louis XVI's blessings, we must reluctantly point out an evil: Alsace devoured by Jewish usury. We will then show how the gentle, peaceful genius of Louis XVI strove to draw a double benefit from this evil: one for his Christian subjects; the other for those poor Jews whom his heart yearned to merge with his children.

Alsace was home to a group of Jews known in France at the time as the German Jews.

Under Louis XVI, there were three distinct groups of Jews in France.

Spanish and Portuguese Jews. Expelled from Spain in 1492, and from Portugal in 1496, they had taken refuge in France. They lived in Bordeaux and Bayonne.

Avignon Jews; also from Spain, they lived in Comtat-Venaissin.

German Jews. Driven out of the German Empire in the fifteenth century, they spread and settled in Alsace and Lorraine.

This chapter deals only with the German Jews.

The Jewish population of Alsace at the time of Louis XVI's reign was 19,624.

The Christian population was 500,000. Jews therefore represented barely one-twenty-fifth of the population.

Well, this beautiful region of Alsace groaned and withered under

their wear and tear. As it would be very painful for us to recount the wrongs of our ancestors ourselves, we'll borrow the story from authors of the time who seemed sincere.

To begin with, here is Alsace's cry of distress: "How many evils we are suffering at the hands of the ancient inhabitants of Palestine! Would to God they were still there! We wouldn't have so much misery¹".

Next, here's a portrait of the Alsatian Jew, drawn by a writer almost contemporaneous with these sad episodes: "The Alsatian Jew is generally reproached for being processive, cautious, fertile in expedients, obstinate in his plans, persevering in overcoming obstacles to satisfy his greed, and unscrupulous about the choice of means. In his obsequious subtlety, in his debased exterior, his shifty gaze has something of the Greek oppressed by the Crescent on the ruins of Athens. When he approaches you, he makes a detour, bows deeply and speaks in a low voice; one is always tempted to say to him: Speak up, and walk straight. His language is a kind of slang, a Tudesque jargon mixed with corrupted Hebrew, unknown to those around him, and very apt to perpetuate ignorance or mask deceit¹."

Then, here is a summary of the usury of the Jews in Alsace: "The bills of the peasants of the province of Alsace alone, signed by them to the Jews, their creditors, having been registered a few years ago by decree of the Sovereign Council of Colmar, present in their totality sums, the immensity of which combined makes one groan. It is claimed that a third of the territorial possessions of this beautiful province are mortgaged to them. However, they are shared between 500,000 very active inhabitants, very good farmers, while Alsace contains at most 18 to 20,000 Jews. It is clear, therefore, from the ratio of these two numbers, that the Jews, like hornets, are largely sucking the honey out of this beautiful hive populated by such hard-working bees. "²

Finally, here is the state of despondency and distress into which Alsace had fallen: "... Unfortunate inhabitants of the Sundgau,¹ answer, if you still have the strength; isn't this frightening picture (the picture of families completely ruined by usury) that of the state to which several Jews have reduced you? Your land, once fertile and

which enriched your fathers, now barely produces a loaf of coarse bread for a host of their nephews; and creditors as ruthless as they are rascals still vie with you for the price of your sweat. What will you use to cultivate these fields of which you now have only precarious enjoyment? Your livestock and farming tools have been sold to satisfy the vipers, to pay only a portion of the usurious rents accumulated on your heads. No longer able to solicit the fertility of the earth, you are reduced to cursing the fertility of your wives who gave birth to unfortunate children. All you have been left with are arms parched with pain and hunger; and if you still have rags to attest your misery and bathe them in your tears, it's because the Jewish usurer disdained to tear them from you."

These cries of compassion are not suspect, exaggerated. They were uttered by the very man who, a few years later, was to work most ardently to bring about the emancipation of the Jews.²

Such, then, was the state of Alsace in 1778. Many Christians, debtors of the Jews, were reduced to begging.

II

THE SHAMEFUL EPISODE OF FORGED RECEIPTS. A
CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF PEASANT FORGERS. THE
LIGHT SHED ON THIS INCREDIBLE STORY. NOBLE
DECISION BY THE GOVERNMENT OF LOUIS XVI

Suddenly, Alsace was flooded with receipts written in Hebrew. Suddenly, a number of Christians found themselves suddenly free of their debts: they showed the Hebrew receipts in their hands. - It is important for the reader to know that until the end of the last century, as Jews were not considered citizens anywhere, they carried out most of their transactions in the language of their nation, Hebrew. - On the one hand, therefore, a large number of peasants are delighted to be even with the Jews, and produce receipts. On the other hand, the entire Jewish population cries foul! They denounce thousands of Christians.

What had happened?

All these receipts were forgeries!

This was certainly an unprecedented episode in the annals of commerce and transactions. We've seen princes and lords confiscate the property of Jews; we've seen mobs forcibly rid themselves of creditors and debts; but we've never seen a whole Christian province resort to forgery. It's astonishing," says an author of the time, "that almost all the libels and newspapers read about this event. No, it's not surprising. At the time, the press was still under Christian supervision, so Louis XVI's government easily demanded and obtained silence. And they were right. Pride dictated that an affair should be hushed up, in which Christians were unfortunately being seen to oppose forgeries to Jewish usury, in other words, to oppose knavery to knavery.

As another contemporary author observes, "This affair, considered in its entirety, offers a mystery of iniquity, a work of darkness that it is neither possible nor prudent to delve into too deeply".¹

A century has passed since then. The reason for prudence no longer interests us. We have therefore sought to lift the veil, and

here is what we have been able to discover:

First, the very real fact of the forged receipts:

Archives nationales (papiers de la maison du Roi), K. 1142, no. 49: "A few years ago, a considerable number of peasants in Alsace, being sued by Jews for the payment of sums they had borrowed from them, claimed to have repaid them, and even produced receipts. All these receipts turned out to be false. Proceeding criminally against the forgers was something that their prodigious numbers made absolutely impossible.... " So much for the truth of the matter.

As for the starting point of this singular affair, we have also come to know it. The plot was hatched and directed by a bailiff of various seigniorial courts in Upper Alsace. A flexible, skilful spirit, useful and often necessary to some of the great lords, he had managed to captivate their goodwill and make himself listened to by them. His influence on the people was equally great. He hated the Jews. He had learned their language, he knew Hebrew. As a new Aman, he dreamed, not of destroying their lives, but of destroying their debts. Such is the portrait of this bailiff, according to chronicles published in Prussia at the time¹.

One day, Alsace was flooded with forged receipts. One can easily imagine the bewilderment and uproar of the Jews. When the Egyptians lost their first-born in the tenth plague of Egypt, their cries were no more desolate than those of the sons of Jacob in Alsace, when they believed their claims lost forever. You'd have thought from their cries that the production of forged receipts would come to an immediate halt. Not so. It continued unabated. A book was even published to justify this method of liberation. The book said that "the Jews had deserved it for their sins".¹

Unfortunately, the most deplorable aspect of this affair was the role played by religion. Well-known, authorized figures travelled the length and breadth of Alsace, laden with cords of orders, crosses and objects of piety, announcing themselves as having been sent to the peasants to protect the manufacture of false receipts, and to effect the total expulsion of the Jews. Alas, the good debtor peasants had no trouble believing in the mission of these envoys.¹

We have not been able to find out the names of these people, as

the prudence referred to by the contemporary quoted above covered them with a veil. On the other hand, we have had the satisfaction of finding the name of the famous bailiff.

Archives nationales, K, 1142, no. 49. “.... Sieur Hell, bailiff of Landser, was suspected of being the author. If his protectors, many of whom are justly esteemed, portrayed him as a judge as honest as he was enlightened, others, on the contrary, considered him a clever and dangerous deceiver, and accused him of the most criminal prevarications.

“By virtue of orders dispatched on February 18, 1780, he was arrested and taken to the Strasbourg citadel, where his papers were seized.... M. le Prince de Montbarey, then Secretary of State for the province, was given a host of documents and information concerning Sieur Hell.

“The main ones are bills and letters in Hebrew characters. It is claimed that they are from Sieur Hell, to whom this language is no less familiar than to Jews.

“These various documents charge Sieur Hell with very serious offences.

The designation of the culprit could not be clearer.

But what was the conclusion of this singular affair, which deeply troubled Alsace from 1779 to 1785? Noble and prudent, as Louis XVI was to be expected to be.

Indeed :

a) His government, so honest, while deploring the customs of the Jews, disavowed this way of liberating itself from them.¹

b) The bold bailiff was arrested by order of the King and confined to the Strasbourg citadel. Enlarged shortly afterwards thanks to his powerful protectors, he was nevertheless exiled to Valence.²

c) The most severe penalties were pronounced against those who continued to manufacture or produce false receipts. Unfortunately, the peasants had acquired a taste for it. “Many, convicted of forgery with recidivism, were punished according to the rigors of the law. “3 Since this example was not enough to halt the course of such disorder, it is said that capital sentences were handed down. Only one author, however, mentions this recourse to the ultimate torture.⁴

d) To safeguard Christian dignity, the peasants were allowed to withdraw, within two months, the false receipts they had produced, without incurring the penalties of forgery which the king was willing to pardon them for. *Lettres patentes du roi*, May 27, 1780, art. 4: "Voulons que tous débiteurs chrétiens de la classe du peuple qui ont opposé aux juifs, leurs créanciers, des fausses quittances, soient dûment aververtises par des publications ordinaires et même aux prônes des églises, d'avoir à retirer dans deux mois pour tout délai, lesdites quittances et à s'en désister; sinon et à faute de ce faire dans ledit délai, et celui passé, Voulons qu'ils soient poursuivis et jugés comme faussaires, suivant la rigueur des ordonnances. "1

e) Finally, what was most beneficial for Jacob's children was the King's order instructing his Sovereign Council of Alsace to sort out and settle all interests. Commissions were also appointed to examine the Jews' claims, with the power to grant any delays they saw fit.

Despite all these wise precautions, the Sovereign Council of Alsace had great difficulty in sorting out the chaos.²

III

THIS EPISODE, THE STARTING POINT OF A
NEW ORDER OF THINGS FOR THE JEWS

Such was the strange episode that all writers on the subject of the Jews have mentioned as very important and mysterious, but none of them have gone into it in any depth. In our opinion, it was the starting point for a new order of things for the Jews of France. In a precious memoir that only one historian, Halévy, has preserved for us, they begged Louis XVI to take pity on their false position. The beneficent justice of a cherished King," they said in this memoir, "excites our confidence. "1

On the other hand, the dismal state of Alsace, disorganized if not devoured by them, preoccupied Louis XVI. His government reflected, questioned and deliberated. The result was the famous Letters Patent of 1784. For the Jews, these letters patent created a kind of intermediary between their past state and their complete emancipation. Let's take a look at them. But first, it is important to appreciate the event we have just described.

IV

APPRECIATION. FAULTY CHRISTIANS,
EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

It seems to us that on both sides, with the Christian peasants of Alsace as with the Jews, there was fault and excuse, blame and extenuating circumstances.

As far as the Christian peasants were concerned, their fault lay in trying to take justice into their own hands, when they had Louis XVI. They had to take their complaints to the foot of the Throne. Certainly, a third of Alsace's territorial possessions mortgaged, live-stock and farming implements auctioned off, so many arms withered by pain and hunger, so many families reduced to begging and panic, all this spoke eloquently enough in favor of the peasants of Alsace squeezed and ruined by the Jews! Louis XVI rushed to his children's aid. We have recounted how the good king rushed to their aid with food supplies, when in 1784 their existence had been endangered by famine: he would not have failed to present himself with treasures and the law, on learning that it was once again endangered by the usury of the Jews. It was therefore wrong to take justice into one's own hands; wrong above all to have used fraud and forgery.

Which of the usurious Jews or the counterfeiters is more guilty? The answer, alas, is easy. - Certainly, the Jews did wrong by employing usury; it was not up to Christians to do worse by resorting to forgeries. A contemporary author, examining this affair, concluded with this exclamation: "We pity the Jews; let us pity the Christians by condemning them. "1

It has to be said, however, that there was one mitigating circumstance for the indebted poor: desperation. We shudder with indignation," says a contemporary, "at the sight of the evils caused by the Jews in this province. It's easy to see how the poor peasants, deceived, sucked dry by the usurious Jews, could have given in to a suggestion like this: the deceived man is authorized to deceive the deceiver, in other words, as we said, to pit frippery against frippery. Indeed, in order to exonerate themselves, memoirs were published

which stated: “That a society of men, many millions of whom have been ruined by the extortion of usury, is entitled to annul the effect of unjust commitments which cause so many tears to flow “1.

All this proves how necessary the presence of a respectable and respected authority is in a nation. Once again, we had Louis XVI. Why didn’t we turn to his father?

As for those who, as protectors of the perfidious bailiff, remained in the shadows, while they encouraged the people to become forgers, swell and scorn upon them!...

V

WRONGS OF THE JEWISH USURERS; WHAT
WE MUST ALSO FORGIVE THEM FOR

We have judged the Christian peasant forgers. Let us now judge the Jewish usurers.

On their usury, we say above all: reprobation. Alas, as we bow our heads in recognition, our people appear in history with the glaring stigma of usury. Physically degraded by institutions of contempt, by the toll, by the rouelle, by the yellow hat, they were also morally degraded by usury. So many complaints, so many bitter and outrageous terms we've come across about these usurers in the old books! We won't repeat them. Nor will we recount the usurious, i.e. detestable, methods by which the peasants of Alsace were gradually reduced to begging, and then to despair. Suffice it to say that Judaic usury has rightly been compared to Proteus in the Fable. Usury metamorphosed and took on as many forms as there were species of contract in civil society. Nothing could be stronger in expressing the devastation it caused in Alsace during the reign of Louis XVI than the words of one historian: "Entire villages were seen to contain no more solvent individuals. So we have to say again, painfully but rightly, that we disapprove of the old, sad habits of our ancestors!"

And yet, isn't there a mitigating circumstance for them too?

In the case of Christian forgers, we have found despair to be an extenuating circumstance. What can we allege in favor of the Jewish usurers?

Their role as outcasts and pariahs.

For nineteen centuries, they were rejected from all ranks of society, unable to be farmers, landowners or citizens; persecuted and often expelled from the lands where they had hoped to live and die in peace; troubled even in the only means of existence left to them, trade, where their gains aroused terrible covetousness: is it not an extenuating circumstance that, in the throes of such hopeless perplexities, they sought in rapine the equivalent of their calamities? Having reason to doubt that the money they lent would ever be returned

to them, they made sure that their capital was quickly returned to them with enormous interest payments; and, conceiving only the law of retaliation, they practiced usury with a clear conscience. We have found in an old manuscript a phrase that would be picturesque if it were not profoundly sad: they repaid by usury the gold they had lost by violence.

Certainly, there's much to moan about, on both sides. These are things we'd like to erase from history. But since we write to contribute to a rapprochement, we can't think it wrong that in these sad episodes, we have sought to discover certain excusable sides. The irritating aspects have been brought to light all too often! Today, isn't it preferable, in order to encourage the forgetting of mutual wrongs and forgiveness, to bring out the extenuating circumstances?

How we love the noble cry of a great monk: "We grow weary of exterminating one another without profit to God or man; and the day arrives when the human race, gathered together, its hand on its wounds and its spirit lifted up to its Father, no longer expects anything but charity to triumph over truth."³¹

CHAPTER III

LETTERS PATENT OF 1784

CONCERNING THE JEWS OF ALSACE

I

THE EPISODE OF THE FORGED RECEIPTS LED TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE LETTERS PATENT OF 1784. LOUIS XVI'S AIM WAS TWOFOLD: TO PROTECT HIS CHRISTIAN SUBJECTS, BUT ALSO TO IMPROVE THE POSITION OF THE JEWS.

What was meant by Letters Patent?

In chancery, this was the term used to designate all the King's letters on parchment, sealed with the Great Seal and countersigned by a Secretary of State. They were called *patentes*, because they were issued open (from the Latin word *patere*, to open). *Lettres patentes* were the most common form by which the Bois demonstrated their munificence or dispensed justice. In this case, the Letters Patent of 1784 are both an act of justice and munificence.

In fact, while looking through the papers of the King's household in the Archives nationales, we had the rare good fortune to find the secret memoir or preparatory work from which the articles that make up these Letters Patent of 1784 were extracted. It follows that, in order to appreciate Louis XVI's intentions, we possess not only the text of the law, but even the legislator's innermost thoughts. Certainly, in terms of certainty, we couldn't wish for more.³²

Two very important historical points emerge from a reading of this secret memoir, the source of the Letters Patent:

The first: that it was the episode of the forged receipts that prompted the appearance of these Letters Patent;

The second: that Louis XVI, in issuing these 1784 ordinances, had a dual aim: to protect his Christian subjects, but also to improve the position of the Jews.

Yes, safeguarding Christian interests and improving the situa-

tion of the Jews was the related undertaking that the good King, moved by the sad episode of the forged receipts, wished to pursue. The preamble to the precious document preserved at the Archives Nationales leaves no doubt in this regard.

First of all, the episode of forged receipts is presented as the cause of this new regulation concerning the Jews. The Memoire asks that Christians no longer be exposed to being drawn into such crimes of forgery.

Sire,

“Most of the Jews established in Alsace subsist only on usury and are therefore very harmful. They have successively become the creditors of a very large number of commoners.

“These men, whose insidious advice and inability to free themselves have suggested the idea of opposing forgery to usury, have almost all produced false receipts, so that if the administration had not been lenient towards them, If the administration had not shown them clemency, if it had not given them and was not working to give them further facilities to discharge their debts, these men who are so useful, since most of them are farmers, would end up being victims of their insolvency or of the criminal expedient by which they tried to make up for it.

“This is what has made it all too clear that the way in which the Jews exist in Alsace leads to inconveniences which it is both instantaneous and essential to put an end to.

“To achieve this, Your Majesty has instructed the heads of the administration of the province of Alsace to investigate and indicate the true causes of the evil and the means to remedy it. This they have done.”³³

As we can see, the Memoire demands, first and foremost, that the primary goal be to safeguard the interests of the King’s Christian subjects.

But at the same time as calling for the safeguarding of Christian interests, the Mémoire eagerly proposes that the monarch should

also feel sorry for the fate of the Jews, and improve their sad and unbearable social situation. In the following terms:

“Jews are excluded from all public office and employment. Virtually all types of commerce and industry are forbidden to them. They can neither own nor rent property. In general, all honest means of subsistence are forbidden to them.

“On the other hand, they are the object of public contempt, and cannot fail to be so, since they have hitherto been debased to the point of being required to pay tolls that equate them with animals. Thus deprived of any hope of attaining consideration, even if they were worthy of it, they must do nothing to deserve it. Reduced to such an existence, they can only direct their speculations towards money, the only resource left to them; and as they have been deprived of all lawful means of obtaining it, they resort to more or less illegitimate and odious expedients.”³⁴

Certainly, the unfortunate social situation of the Jews could not be presented in a more vivid summary. The *Mémoire* is impartial. While on the one hand it shows the Jews to be very harmful to Christians, on the other it deplores the fact that all honest means of subsistence have been taken away from them.

In order to achieve the twofold aim of safeguarding Christian interests and improving the situation of the Jews, the *Mémoire* proposed twenty-five articles to the wisdom of Louis XVI, preceded by justificatory reflections, which formed the body of the Letters Patent of 1784.

These Letters Patent are set out below in twenty-five articles. In the two chapters that follow, we will then impartially examine whether these Letters Patent really safeguarded the interests of the Christian people and improved the moral and social situation of the Jews.

Protecting and improving, isn't that the great task of those who govern?

NOTE: To facilitate the reader's rapid understanding of these

Letters Patent, we have grouped the articles that go together under general headings. In the right-hand margin, we have marked with asterisks those articles which are more specifically the subject of our examination in the two subsequent chapters.

II

PRESENTATION OF THESE LETTERS PATENT, OR
REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE RESIDENCE OF JEWS,
THEIR MARRIAGES, THEIR TRADE, THEIR RELATIONS
WITH PROPERTY, WITH CHRISTIANS, ETC.

LETTERS PATENT FROM THE KING
SUPPORTING
THE REGULATIONS CONCERNING JEWS IN ALSACE
July 10, 1784

LOUIS, *by the grace of God, King of France and Navarre*: To all those who will see these Letters, *greetings*. We have received an account of the rules established for the Jews of our province of Alsace, and, after weighing the advantages and disadvantages, We have deemed it necessary to make certain changes, by which We propose to reconcile, as far as We consider possible, their interests with those of our subjects. For these and other reasons, in the opinion of Our Council and of Our certain knowledge, full power and royal authority, We have said, ruled and ordered, and by these presents signed by Our hand, We say, rule and order, We wish and it pleases us, the following:

ART. I — Jews living in the province of Alsace who, at the time of publication of these presents, have no fixed or known domicile there, and who have paid neither the right of protection due to Us, nor those of reception and dwelling belonging to the lords or towns, nor the contribution to the expenses of the communities, will be obliged within three months, from the day of the said publication, to leave the said Province, even if they offer to pay the said rights and the said contribution. It is our wish that any of the said Jews who are found in the said Province after the expiry of the term fixed by the present article, be prosecuted and treated as vagrants and people without a confession, in accordance with the strictness of the Ordinances.

ART. II — We expressly forbid all lords, towns and communities enjoying the right of seigniorship to admit any foreign Jews in the future, until otherwise ordered by Us.

ART. III — Foreign Jews who travel to Alsace on trade or other business will be required to bring with them certificates or passports signed by the magistrate of the places where the said Jews ordinarily reside; these certificates will contain their names, titles and professions, the designation of the places to which they are to travel, and the time during which they intend to stay there. The certificates or passports will be presented by them to the Magistrate of the first town in Alsace through which they pass, who will endorse the passports. By virtue of the said passports thus stamped, the said Jews may stay for three months in the places of the Province specified therein. They may also, if circumstances so require, obtain permission from the Magistrate of the said places to extend their stay for six weeks. If there is no Magistrate in the area, said permission may be issued by the judge.

ART. IV — All foreign Jews who enter Alsace without having complied with the provisions of the preceding article will be arrested and punished in accordance with the strictness of the ordinances concerning vagrants and people without a confession.

ART. V — We expressly forbid all rabbis and other Jews, in the future, to give stage tickets or lodging, by virtue of which a Jew may lodge in the house of another, and be fed there. We similarly forbid all Jews residing in Alsace to provide any lodging to foreign Jews, and all innkeepers, innkeepers and other inhabitants to lodge and receive them, unless they have first presented them with the passports they are required to have, on pain of a fine of three hundred pounds for each offender.

ART. VI — We expressly forbid all Jews currently residing in Alsace to enter into any future marriage without our express permission, even outside the States under our domination, under penalty

of immediate expulsion from the said Province.

ART. VII — We consequently forbid rabbis to proceed with the celebration of any of the said marriages, unless it appears to them that they have our permission, under penalty against the said rabbis of a fine of three thousand livres, which may not be deemed comminatory, and of expulsion in the event of a repeat offence.

ART. VIII — Permit the Jews of Alsace to lease farms in the communities to which they have been admitted, on condition that they remain on said farms and run them themselves. We also authorize them to lease vineyards, land and generally all other types of property, but to cultivate them themselves. We further forbid them to employ Christian servants either to run the said farms or to cultivate the said vines and land. In addition, we want them to have the facility to undertake land clearing, to take charge of coal mining or other activities, and to deal with all kinds of works, either for the public service or on behalf of private individuals. Our intention, moreover, is that they may not subcontract either for the said undertakings and operations, or for the said works.

ART. IX — We have authorized and authorize Jews established in our Province of Alsace, to engage in banking, as well as any kind of business, traffic and wholesale and retail trade, on the condition that they comply with the regulations concerning trade. We also authorize them to set up factories and fabric mills, as well as forges, glassworks and earthenware factories, on condition that they obtain the permissions required for our subjects. We further require that their books or registers be kept in the vernacular. We expressly forbid them to use the Hebrew language, on pain of a thousand pound fine.

ART. X — We expressly forbid any Jew to acquire under his own name or that of any other private individual, either by contract of voluntary sale, or by auction, or by way of assignment in payment of annuities or extinction of capital, any land of any kind whatsoever, even under the condition of reselling it within one year.

We hereby declare null and void all sales, auctions or assignments of land that may be made to them.

ART. XI — Jews may nevertheless continue to acquire, as property, the houses necessary for their personal dwelling only, as well as the gardens adjoining them; provided, however, that these houses and gardens are proportionate to the state and needs of the purchaser, which will be verified and settled by the lord intendant and deputy commissioner, before whom they will be required to provide for this purpose.

ART. XII — Once the Jews have been received by the lords who have the right to receive them, and once they have paid the reception fee and the annual housing fee, they may only be dismissed by said lords for misdeeds or misconduct duly recorded by the local judges.

ART. XIII — The rabbis established either by us or by the lords who have the right to appoint them, will continue to hear, as in the past, all disputes that may arise between Jews only, concerning the observance of their laws, as well as all matters of civil police in which our subjects will not be involved. In all cases other than those designated by the present article, all Jews established in the towns and communities of Alsace will be and remain subject to the local justice and police officers.

ART. XIV — In the future, Jews may only enter into contracts with any of our subjects, either for loans of money, or for the sale of grain, livestock or other objects of any kind whatsoever, by deeds executed before a notary, or by bills and contracts drawn up in the presence of two community officials who will sign said bills and contracts, and witness the enumeration of monies. We intend that in the event of contravention of the present article, the bills or contracts shall be null and void, and that the Jew who has signed them shall be expelled from our Kingdom.

ART. XV — Nevertheless, we exclude from the provisions of

the preceding article bills of exchange, promissory bills and other writings used between Jews and those of our subjects who practice the profession of bankers or merchants, provided that the writings in question only relate to banking and commerce.

ART. XVI — We forbid all Jews to write and sign in Hebrew characters the receipts they give to their debtors, and the writings they make with them. We declare null and void all writings and receipts of this kind that are written in any language other than French or the common language used in Alsace, except, when a Jew cannot write or sign his name in French or German, to make up for this by observing the formalities prescribed by ordinance in this regard.

ART. XVII — We also forbid them to stipulate in the bills, which will be made in their favor, supplies of grain and other commodities and goods for the payment of interest and capital lent by them, under penalty of nullity of said bills. We want the said interest be stipulated only in deniers and at the ordinary rate.

ART. XVIII — Jews who are admitted to testify either in civil or criminal proceedings, and to whom the oath has been referred, will be required to take it in the same manner as Jews established in Germany, and to follow in this respect the form which will be prescribed by our Sovereign Council of Alsace and sent to the seats of its jurisdiction for observance.

ART. XIX — Jews may only be admitted to the benefit of assignment of property with the consent of three quarters of their Christian creditors. Their wives may not use the benefit of separation of property to the detriment of their husbands' Christian creditors. However, we allow Jewish women to stipulate in their marriage contracts that they may administer and manage, under their own name, their present and future contributions, provided that in this case the marriage contracts are registered at the Clerk's Office of the jurisdiction of the husbands' domicile.

ART. XX — Jews may only sue in their own and private name, except for those residing in the same place, who may plead in collective name when they have a common interest. Furthermore, we wish that matters concerning the Jews in general continue to be handled and followed by agents they will have in the province, who will be designated under the name of syndics of the Jews and will be elected by them under the authority of the Royal provincial steward.

ART. XXI — We forbid the Jews to assemble in any case without having been authorized to do so by the We want that, when the said trustees have drawn up the rolls for the distribution of the sums that the Jews will be able to levy on them, either for their needs, or for the relief of their poor, the said rolls cannot be enforceable until they have been approved by the Royal provincial steward.

ART. XXII — We authorize the said syndics to carry out, always with the authorization of the Royal provincial steward, the distribution of royal taxes, to which the Jews are subject in Alsace, and all other functions hitherto carried out by the *préposés généraux*.

ART. XXIII — The particular officials elected by the Jewish communities shall be and remain privately charged with the duty of overseeing and supervising the execution of orders that may be addressed to said communities concerning the collection of sums that we have ordered to be imposed on them, as well as the collection of funds intended to pay expenses common to all the Jews of the Province, as well as those specific to each community. The aforementioned officials will also have the right to convene assemblies when circumstances so require, and to preside over those in which elections for cantor and sergeant will be held. They will draw up the rolls for the distribution among all taxpayers of the sums intended to pay the salaries of the said cantor and sergeant. If any disputes should arise within the synagogues that could disturb the order and tranquility that must prevail in these assemblies, they will provisionally prescribe whatever they deem appropriate to immediately stop the disorder and prevent further disturbances until the matter has

been otherwise provided for in the ordinary manner; and if any of the said Jews refuse to obey the said officials, the latter will have the right to impose fines on them, which may not, however, exceed the sum of three pounds.

ART. XXIV — Legitimately married Jewish men and women may not, if they convert, remarry Catholics unless they are widowers. We declare all marriages of this kind contracted after publication of the present regulation to be harmful, and all children born of the said marriages to be bastards.

ART. XXV — When the Jews of Alsace marry, have a child born to them, or die, those who have contracted said marriages, the parents of the child, those of the deceased, and failing them their friends or neighbors, will be required, no later than two days after said births, marriages or deaths, to make their declaration thereof before the local Judge, under penalty of a fine of one hundred pounds, which declaration, duly signed by both the declarant and the said judge, specifying the exact date of the said marriages, births or deaths, as well as the names, surnames and qualities of those to whom it relates, and having it entered in two registers, one of which will remain in the hands of the said judge, and the other sent by him to the clerk's office of our Sovereign Council of Alsace, to remain deposited there and to be used if need be; only a fee of five sols will be charged for each declaration, and for each extract issued. We hereby instruct our friends and associates holding our Sovereign Council of Alsace in Colmar, to have these present documents registered, and the contents of these documents guarded and observed from point to point: for such is our pleasure. In witness whereof we have caused these presents to be sealed. Given at Versailles on the 10TH day of the month of July, in the year of our Lord 1784 and the 11TH year of our reign.

Signed: LOUIS.

And below,

For the King : LE MARÉCHAL DE SÉGUR.

With initials. Sealed with a large yellow wax seal.

CHAPTER IV

THESE LETTERS PATENT OF 1784 ARE THE LAST EFFORT OF A CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT PROTECTING PEOPLES AGAINST THE JEWISH INVASION

I

MISSION OF THE CATHOLIC KINGS IN SAFEGUARDING THE INTERESTS OF THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE AGAINST JEWISH INVASION. THEIR VIGILANCE UNTIL 1789. LOUIS XVI'S LETTERS PATENT ARE AN EXPRESSION OF THIS VIGILANCE.

How beautiful was the mission of the Catholic kings! God and His Son Jesus Christ had established kings to be the fathers of the Christian people. As fathers, they were to lead them, watch over them, surround them with precautions and defend them. The shepherd in the midst of his flock, directing and defending them - this is the eternal type of both prince and pontiff! The pontiff must lead the Christian people to the eternal hills; the prince, to guide and protect them through the paths of the earth. Their mission is related.

The Christian people were rarely compact. Jews, heretics and infidels settled in their midst. This made the kings' mission extremely delicate. They were alarmed, and rightly so, just as a father is alarmed when his family is threatened by some danger. The Christian people were the family: the Jews, pagans and infidels were the strangers. In such cases, kings took all the precautions dictated by duty and paternal solicitude, to preserve for the children of the family, i.e. the Christian populations, the inheritance they had inherited from Christ: an inheritance called faith, heaven, and dominion, earth. They ensured that foreigners did not usurp this inheritance. So, as Bossuet remarks, they made very just laws against pagans, Jews and heretics. On the other hand, as they wished to respect as much as possible the natural rights of these foreigners who had placed themselves in

the shadow of their scepter, and who often rendered great services to their royal persons and kingdoms, they granted them a certain protection. As we can see, the kings' mission was very delicate indeed in such circumstances. It could be said that, torn between defending their Christian family and pitying these foreigners, they found themselves in the same perplexity as Abraham, torn between his love for Isaac and his pity for Ishmael. Remember the scene from the Bible.

When Sarah saw the son of Hagar, an Egyptian who persecuted her son Isaac, she said to Abraham, "Send her away with her son, for the son of this servant will not be heir with my son Isaac.

"This speech seemed harsh to Abraham because of Ishmael. But God said to him: "Let not what Sarah has said to you seem too harsh; do whatever she tells you.

"So Abraham got up at daybreak, took bread and a jug full of water, put it on Hagar's shoulder, gave her his son and sent them away. She went out and wandered in the solitude of Bersabee "1.

This page of the Bible was prophetic, expressing the conduct that Catholic kings were to adopt in the conflicts that would arise between the Jewish people and the Christian people. It has not been noticed enough. The Jewish people are Ishmael; the synagogue's mother is Hagar, or the handmaid. The Christian people are Isaac, and the Church is Sara or the queen.² S. Paul proved and developed this. Paul proved and developed this.³ Whenever the Church realized that the Jewish people were becoming dangerous to the Christian people, encroaching on their rights, and threatening to invade or destroy the inheritance brought by Christ, the Church immediately became alarmed, warned the prince, and said to him, as Sarah did to Abraham: the son of the handmaid must not be heir with my son Isaac. This speech sometimes seemed harsh to the rulers, either because of the services the Jews rendered to their crown, or because of the pity they felt for these poor people who had entrusted themselves to their scepter. Above all, the salvation of the children and the preservation of their inheritance. The Jews were consequently expelled, driven out; and, like Hagar, they wandered from country to country: she wandered in the solitude of Bersabaea! We challenge our ancient co-religionists to prove that this page of the Bible had

nothing to do with them.

The royal authority therefore had to be severe at times, like Abraham towards Ishmael, while at the same time feeling the patriarch's deep pity.

This explains the severity of Saint Louis towards the Jews of France; of Ferdinand the Catholic towards the Jews of Spain; of Edward the Confessor towards the Jews of England'. Doubtless, not all the princes were completely disinterested in the expulsion of these unfortunate people. Far from it. The name of Philip the Fair, among others, brings to mind the basest lusts. But all of them, as the documents attest, had the protection of the Christian people as their primary goal. At the head of each expulsion of Jews, we can almost invariably place, as an epigraph, the episode of Ishmael driven out because of Isaac's salvation and to safeguard his inheritance.

We are now in a position to explain the severity of the Letters Patent of 1784. Louis XVI wanted to preserve his people's heritage. He surrounds this goal with the purest disinterestedness; ah! Louis XVI covets nothing! He also surrounds it with the gentleness of pity. It's not an expulsion that he decrees; no, it's only precautions: so that, if possible, Ishmael can live next to Isaac!

Let's take a good look at these precautions, for this is the last time in history that the Christian people will be protected by a king against Jewish invasion.

II

SAFEGUARDING THE CATHOLIC FAITH AND GOOD FAITH.

In the heritage of the Christian people, the most precious treasure is faith, and also good faith. Faith is the spirit's adherence to all that God has revealed to His Church. Good faith is the conformity of conduct to all that is right and straightforward. One is the light of the spirit; the other, the light of deeds. Remarkably, good faith almost always springs from faith: the most beautiful stream on earth, flowing from a heavenly source! Anyone who feels deeply that he has the honour of being a child of Christ and his Church is incapable of deceit.

It would seem that these two splendors of spirit and conduct were particularly evident in the land of France, where the Frankish people were, of all peoples, the bulwark of faith and the epitome of honesty. The Franks were men who believed, and who did not deceive.

That being the case, who wouldn't applaud Louis XVI for taking precautions to preserve for his beloved Frankish people the double treasure of faith and good faith? Article vin of the Letters Patent forbids Jews to employ Christian servants. "We further forbid them to employ Christian servants...". Why this prohibition? In order to spare these Christian servants the peril of altering their piety and beliefs, and even the misfortune of apostasy, by living in the common life of the Jews. Protection of the faith!

Article xiv obliges Jews to notarize all transactions with the king's subjects. "Ne pourront à l'avenir les juifs contracter avec aucun de nos sujets, soit pour prêt d'argent, soit pour vente de grains, bestiaux et d'autres objets de quelque nature que ce soit, que par actes passés devant notaire".

found in the National Archives, was very wise, very necessary. It deprived Jews of the ease of usury, and at the same time Christians, driven to despair by usury, of the temptation to free themselves by forging receipts: a safeguard for good faith! Isn't it painful," says the Memoire, "that the King should now be obliged to put Christians

on trial, whom the desire to redeem themselves from the usury of the Jews has precipitated into crime, by making them fabricate false receipts? It is right that the Christian forgers should be punished very severely; but it is worthy of the King's justice and humanity to make it impossible for the Jews to abuse the misery of the country folk to ruin them with usurious loans. "1

III

SAFEGUARDING CATHOLIC PROPERTY.

After faith and good faith, isn't possession of the land, or Catholic territory, the good that is esteemed second in the inheritance of the Christian people?

The whole earth belongs to Jesus Christ.¹ Until He personally takes possession of it at His Second Advent, He providentially has it occupied either by Christian states or by the apostolate of His missionaries. The Church therefore encourages and blesses the efforts of all her children who are working to come into possession of this inheritance by legitimate means.

Catholic territory has never been homogeneous, any more than the Catholic people has been compact. Too many enemies camped across the territorial possessions of the Son of God. Nevertheless, for a long time there was a vast Catholic territory. The land of France, the land of Italy, the land of England, the land of Spain, the land of Austria, the land of Germany, formed a kind of holy land, where the cross could be seen on every road, as if to attest that these domains belonged to Jesus Christ. Throughout this territory, it was very difficult for Jews to acquire or own land. Generally speaking, Jews could not own property in any part of Catholic territory. There were, no doubt, times when they were able, in certain provinces, not only to own land,¹ but even to exercise the rights of seigniorry, and to have Christian vassals;² nevertheless, this participation in the possession of land was less a right for them than a domain of circumstance, due to the fluctuation of customs and changes in the reigning races: they took advantage of this. In some places, they were also granted, at intervals and by grace, to own the plot of land on which the house they lived in was built. They were also sometimes granted the right to acquire other properties, on the express condition that they would trade and resell them within the year. But, as a general rule, it can be said that they were forbidden to possess the land in law and in peace. So true was this, in fact, that many of the Portuguese Jews who took refuge in Bordeaux in 1555 only

managed to remain peaceful owners of their real estate by passing themselves off as new Christians for two centuries.¹ It wasn't until 1723, at a cost of 100,000 livres as a welcome gift, that the government of Louis XV legally recognized them as members of the Israelite religion, while maintaining their properties and privileges.

Now that the possession of land is no longer a privilege for anyone, it may seem strange that the Jews were excluded for so long. But the reader's astonishment will cease, if he takes the trouble to meditate on what follows, by placing himself for a moment from the point of view of Christian law, and even from the point of view of Israelite law.

It has always been recognized that all the great interests of a people have their first and surest foundation in property, in the possession of land. Property is the very foundation of the homeland, of the family, of religion. Take away the land that supports and nourishes a people: the homeland disappears like a cloud or a dream; all that's left is a wandering horde, wandering from one sky to another with its tents and herds. Take away a family's patrimony, i.e. its land: the family no longer has a home, no fixed center, it is compromised. Take away even a religion's spiritual possession of the land, and without a permanent miracle, that religion will be forced to disappear; thus the Jews no longer have Palestine, and the perpetuity of their existence and religious stall is rightly regarded as a prodigy. In a word, land has this magnificent privilege, that it is the surest boulevard of homeland, family and religion itself.

Now, let's take a look at this from the point of view of Christian law, i.e. in the Middle Ages, when Christian law was recognized as public law in Europe. Is it any wonder that, at that time, Jews were forbidden to own property throughout Catholic territory? To prohibit them from owning land was to safeguard the Catholic homeland, the Catholic family and the Catholic religion! Remarkably, no historian of the Middle Ages reports that the Jews complained about this prohibition. They lived with it, understood it and accepted it.

There were several reasons for this resignation among the Jews.

Firstly, in their nomadic position, they didn't care much about owning property, because of the embarrassments associated with it.

Exposed at any moment to edicts of expulsion, they didn't like a soil that fled under their feet: soil had little appeal for them. They preferred movable, transportable wealth, gold, precious stones, bills of exchange.

But then they were perfectly willing, even from an Israelite point of view, not to be called upon to share in the soil of a Catholic territory. For, from the Israelite point of view, no less than from the Christian point of view, the possession of land appears to be a privilege, a prerogative that must not be relinquished. The Jews, when in possession of Palestine, did not recognize the right of anyone, any nation, any religion, to acquire the slightest parcel of sacred territory. The Law of Moses would never have authorized a child of Israel to sell his field to a foreigner. So it's hardly surprising that Catholics, now God's people, should have safeguarded their territory by excluding the Jews from acquiring it, just as the Jews had safeguarded their Holy Land by excluding the nations from possessing it. It was not until 1789, as we shall see in the course of this book, that the Jews began to complain and cry injustice. Why would they do so? Because a new public law, humanitarian law, human rights, will have replaced Christian law. An imprudence that will allow the Jews to become owners, and to invade the heritage of the Christian people at their leisure. But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

Louis XVI is taking measures and precautions to keep the Jews at bay; and he is taking, or rather maintaining, this one: that they will not be able to become property owners. Art. x: "Faisons très expresses défenses à tout juif d'acquérir..... aucuns biens- fonds de quelque nature qu'ils soient, même sous la condition de les resendre dans l'année." Louis XVI acted wisely. We repeat, at the time of the Letters Patent of 1784, France was still an entirely Catholic country, and however strong our sympathies may be for everything that restores honor to the Israelite race, we cannot help but recognize that Louis XVI was sovereignly prudent, sovereignly political in ruling that the Jews would remain excluded from possession of this soil of France, under Christ. To prohibit them from acquiring this soil was to safeguard France as a Catholic country.

There was even an incident that proves how perceptive and

far-sighted was the eye of a Christian king, a son of Saint Louis! The Commission charged with examining the question of the Jews of Alsace leaned towards abandoning the right of ownership. In the report it presented to the monarch, it proposed granting Jews the right to acquire land in complete freedom, i.e. to become full owners. The documents in the Archives Nationales contain the Commission's proposal.¹ Louis XVI rejected it. Article x of the *Lettres Patentes*, above, states his rejection. The good king agreed to improve the condition of the Jews on French soil, to make it as gentle as possible; but he refused to hand over the soil of France to them, by relinquishing the right of ownership. And so it is clear, from the text of the Letters Patent and from these historical revelations, that Louis XVI wished to safeguard the soil of France, and, in safeguarding this soil, to safeguard the homeland, the family and the religion of his children.

IV

SAFEGUARDING THE CATHOLIC MAJORITY.

Finally, in the heritage of the Christian people, a third good excels: the Catholic majority, i.e. the preponderance of Catholics in numbers. Faith, property, numbers – it is, in fact, this triple asset that has made the Christian people so imposing throughout history.

There can be no doubt that majority or numerical superiority is a real, precious, very precious asset. Just as the ocean is the ocean through the abundance and majesty of its waves, so the Catholic people is truly Catholic through the number and majesty of its phalanxes. However, if we glorify numbers as the court of honor of Truth, we do not intend to glorify them as the source of power or the law of success. God forbid! This is the modern error. Sovereign Wisdom did not place the genesis of authority in the multitude, and Omnipotence does not take it into account every time it sets out to show itself. But the crowds have been accepted as a means of highlighting and illustrating the true Church. The Catholic people possess the majority, and as such, they form the court of honor of Truth and one of the splendors of the Church.

We have just seen that the Christian kings were concerned to safeguard the Catholic faith and Catholic territory against Jewish invasion. They also took care to safeguard the Catholic majority.

It may seem surprising, at first glance, that handfuls of wandering Jews, Hebrew families scattered to the four winds of heaven, could become such a threat to the provinces of Christian kingdoms as to displace the majority there. But this was not to be. Nomads, wanderers, the poor Jews arrived in a country that was at first rather small in number. They were counted, alas, one by one at the gates of the cities, as cattle are counted, as we said. Misfortune had driven them from one country to another, while pity and interest led them to settle in another. So they settled. Soon, word of their welcome, privileges and concessions spread far and wide to other Jewish communities. Isn't communication between the unfortunate quick? Other Jews were arriving from far away. New families, expelled from elsewhere, were

allowed to join existing Jewish families. In short, a kind of Israelite tribe ended up in the area. Add to this the prodigious fecundity of Jewish families, always in honor among this people, and it's easy to understand how, at certain moments in the history of Christian peoples, the children of the Church were no longer the masters here or there, because they were no longer numerous.

But here again, the vigilance of Christian kings was not lacking. We see them taking precautions to preserve for their peoples the preponderance of numbers, just as they took care to preserve for them the treasure of the faith and ownership of the soil. The Letters Patent of 1784 are remarkable in this respect. We have said that in Alsace, where our historical drama unfolds, there were some 20,000 Jews. The Christian population was 500,000. So how could it be that the Catholic majority was suffering? It was because the Jews had attached themselves preferentially to small localities, to villages, and to certain villages in particular. The chronicles compare them to shoals of locusts that would have fallen on one field rather than another. It has to be said that this emigration of troops to such and such a place often took place in spite of them, being in some way imposed on them by a more or less favorable political wind, just as the shoal of locusts is carried away and directed by the blowing wind. For example, they were completely forbidden to live in the city of Strasbourg. Any Jew who entered the city during the day was required to leave in the evening, at the sound of the belfry. Expelled from this large center, expelled from the other centers of Alsace, they naturally turned to the villages, to this village, to that small town. There, they gathered, grew and multiplied; and there came a time when, little by little, not only the Catholic influence had finally disappeared before the Jewish influence, but even the majority. In Alsace, it was not uncommon to find villages composed almost entirely of Jews. The seven lean cows had devoured the seven fat ones.

Against this invasion by numbers, here are the precautions we find pointed out and adopted by Louis XVI in the Letters Patent of 1784. These are the first five articles.

ART. I - Jews living in the province of Alsace who, at the time of publication of these letters, have no fixed or known domicile there - that is, vagrant Jews - will be required to leave the said province within three months...

ART. II - We expressly forbid all lords, towns and communities to admit any foreign Jews in the future...

ART. III - Foreign Jews who travel to Alsace will be required to bring with them certificates or passports, which will contain the names of the places to which they are to travel, and the length of time they intend to stay there.

ART. IV - All foreign Jews who enter Alsace without having complied with the provisions of the preceding article will be arrested and punished in accordance with the strictness of the ordinances concerning vagrants and people without a confession.

ART. V - We expressly forbid all rabbis and all Jews residing in Alsace... to provide any retreat to foreign Jews.

Through these various measures, the monarch limited and halted the external development of the Jews in Alsace. He tolerated all Jews living in Alsace, but did not accept any from abroad. He did not expel those who were already there, but rejected any new arrivals. In these measures, we find nothing but the most legitimate and praiseworthy. It's always Ishmael we want to prevent from dominating, and Isaac we don't want to let fall under Ishmael's domination.

But if, from the point of view of Catholic law, we accept these coercive measures against our people, we will be allowed, from the point of view of natural law, to speak out with sadness and force against another measure which was taken, and which we dare to call an unfortunate measure. Why did the government of Louis XVI resort, against the Jews, to forced celibacy, to the imposition of sterility?

V

A REGRETTABLE EFFORT THAT OVERSHOOTS THE MARK:
THE SANCTITY OF ISRAELITE MARRIAGE JEOPARDIZED
BY ARTICLE VI OF THE LETTERS PATENT.

Numerous offspring have always been the distinctive character of Jewish families. No race has obeyed the Lord's precept more punctually and rapidly: Grow and multiply!

A number of factors have helped to preserve the halo of this prodigious and beautiful fecundity of Jewish families for nearly five thousand years.

Religious causes: respect for Jehovah's words: "Grow and multiply". - The memory of the patriarchs and their touching patriarchal reunions. - The hope that each family would see the Messiah emerge from its ranks. - So barrenness was considered an opprobrium.

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Moral causes: strict morals. Among other peoples, luxury, vanity and crime often halt the progress of the population and limit the number of children; among the Jewish people, a large family is considered to be honored by the blessings of heaven.

Physical causes: the observances of marriage prescribed by Moses in the Pentateuch protect both decency and fertility.

Political reasons: until 1789, the Jews, exempt from militia and corvée, never dedicated to military service, and marrying very young, grew daily in both population and wealth.

Such were, at the time of Louis XVI's reign, and to some extent still are today, the reasons for the prodigious multiplication of Jewish families.

It follows that marriage was, for this proscribed people, the holy thing par excellence, the remnant of its greatness, its source of blessing, its means of resistance and durability.

Well, we'll reproach Louis XVI's advisors for having urged the monarch, in order to halt the progress of the Jewish population, to thwart marriages and bring the celibacy and sterility he abhorred into play against this people.

Here's what we read in the papers found in the National Archives:
At the monarch's council, two opinions were discussed.

The first was a blunt proposal to limit the number of marriages among the Jews of Alsace, and even to forbid them altogether in localities where the number of Jews outnumbered that of Christians, until the proportion had been re-established. If His Majesty agreed, the following regulation was submitted for his signature:

1. Fix the number of Jewish marriages at 72 per year, including 28 for Jews in Upper Alsace, and 44 for those in Lower Alsace.

2. Order (pie in every locality where the number of Jews would be too disproportionate to that of Christians, no marriage would be permitted until the proportion had been re-established.

The honor of French jurisprudence prevented this opinion from prevailing.¹ "Even if it seems essential to adopt such means, it is not appropriate to express them in a regulation destined to be registered in a sovereign court;

"However necessary they may seem, they are no less contrary to the will of nature.

"Such laws would seem quite extraordinary.

These reflections are taken from the report read before Louis XVI.³⁵

A second opinion, a second plan, was therefore proposed.

Identical in substance to the previous one, it differed at least in form. It concluded that it was necessary to limit the number of marriages, and even to forbid them altogether in certain localities; only it was deemed prudent not to formulate anything in this respect. It was therefore proposed that the King adopt a provision requiring Jews not to marry without His Majesty's express permission.

In this way," say the secret papers, "we will have the means to limit the number of marriages, and even to forbid them if necessary, and this means will be in the hands and in the secrecy of

the administration, which, according to circumstances, will grant or refuse permission for Jews to marry.”³⁶

This second option was adopted. Consequently, in the Letters Patent of 1784, the following article was formulated:

Art. VI - We expressly forbid all Jews currently residing in Alsace to enter into any future marriage without our express permission, under penalty of being ‘incontinently expelled from the said Province.

Old blood of the patriarchs, you must have shuddered at such a law! To forbid their children to marry without the express permission of the civil authorities, who were secretly prepared to refuse it time and again... but was this not an attack on nature and the sanctity of morals? Historians who have dealt with this ruling have appropriately criticized it.³⁷ The grave M. de Bonald later said of a similar ruling against Jewish marriage in Bavaria: “There are events less striking than wars and battles, and therefore less noticed by the vulgar, which are nevertheless of quite another importance to indicate the inner state of society, the secret evils that plague it, the insensible march of things, and their influence on minds and on affairs ; and I do not fear to suggest that the ordinance whose provisions I have just quoted is one of the strangest facts in modern history, and one which may offer the most profound and even painful subjects for meditation to a statesman. “1 What is the need, moreover, to appeal to the judgment of history against such a measure? Its very perpetrators were ashamed of it, and adopted it only in secret. What do the revealing papers we quoted above actually contain? This admission: “Even though it seems essential to adopt such means, it is not appropriate to express them in a regulation. We say that if it was not appropriate to express them, it was even less appropriate to adopt them. Why, because there are so many Jews, should nature’s wishes be opposed among them, should the number of marriages be limited, and if necessary forbidden? Ah, don’t you realize that this would be a repeat of Pharaoh’s attack on the children of the Hebrews: he had them drowned, and you’re preventing them from being born!

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Or rather, since nature cannot force itself to celibacy, children will be born to them, but in secret, as the fruit of libertinage, incest and shame... That's it, the Israelite family's patriarchal sanctity is under attack, and you are forcing it into dishonor!

O Louis XVI, O holy martyr King, whose family presented such a touching aspect in the Temple prison, forgive us for defending families against the cruel decree that your advisors withheld from your royal signature. We have approved of everything that the love of the Christian people has inspired you to defend against the Jewish invasion; but here we do not approve, we cannot approve: the goal has been surpassed! Since the ruin of Jerusalem, Israel has been left with only the remnant of its greatness, which is the sanctity of marriage. This remnant must be preserved. The family of Abraham must be able to have children, in freedom and honor!

CHAPTER V

THE LETTERS PATENT OF 1784 ARE
ALSO THE FIRST EFFORT OF A PATERNAL
GOVERNMENT TO CARE FOR THE ISRAELITES
AS IT WOULD ITS OTHER CHILDREN

I

LOUIS XVI'S INTENTION WAS TO PUT AN END TO
THEIR ROLE AS WANDERING JEWS. HENCEFORTH,
NEITHER TOWNS NOR LORDS WOULD BE ABLE TO
DISMISS THEM ARBITRARILY; THE ROYAL POWER
WOULD TAKE THEM UNDER ITS PROTECTION.

The reader will recognize that we have impartially highlighted what is, in a way, the side of justice in the Letters Patent of 1784. How sweet it is for us to turn our attention now to the role of mercy! Justice and mercy are, in our view, the dual character of Louis XVI's decrees concerning the Jews. He wanted to protect his Christian children, and at the same time he wanted to draw into his arms the outcasts, the pariahs, to make them his children too. May he be praised by Christians for his protection, and blessed by Israelites for his mercy!

What, then, are the merciful provisions that appear in the Letters Patent of 1784? How did Louis XVI's government show itself to be paternal?

In several ways:

First and foremost, by adopting measures designed to gradually put an end to the nomadic situation of these poor people.

Louis XVI had freed them from this degrading custom, but they were still wandering Jews. The monarch resolved, on the occasion of the Letters Patent, to add to their rehabilitation by beginning to fix their nomadic and precarious fate. This is the clear aim of the merciful provisions contained in the Letters Patent of 1784. Let's

look at them from this angle.

In feudal society, Jews were subject to as many masters as there were towns and castles. Each particular power had a hold on them. As many lords, so many masters. A lord had his Jews as he had his lands. He either kept them or got rid of them. Montesquieu said: "In those days, men were "regarded as land."³⁸ A petition from the merchants of Paris to Louis XV against the Jews recalls that for a long time, the Jews of Paris were shared between the princes and other lords of the court, who could sell them, claim them and mortgage them; in a word, they were in the trade as an inheritance."³⁹ A Jew was sold, as a field was sold.⁴⁰

Towards the end of the Middle Ages, when royal power was strengthened and increased by the decrease in seigniorial power, the situation of the Jews improved considerably. However, they remained exposed to many caprices and vexations. They were no longer movable property, but they paid the lords and towns that accepted them an annual dwelling fee, often very high.³ On more than one occasion, lords who wanted to make money from the Jews threatened to dismiss them, even though they had paid the dwelling fee. To avoid being chased away, the unfortunates paid twice, paid three times; some, after having given their gold, ended up finding it more bearable to take up the traveler's stick again.⁴¹

Louis XVI's heart was stirred by these lamentable accounts. That's why the Letters Patent contain this provision, an echo of his noble heart.

ART. XII. - Once the Jews have been received by the lords and have paid their annual dwelling fee in full, they may only be dismissed by the said lords for misdeeds or misconduct duly recorded by the local judges.

This royal provision marked the end of arbitrary treatment of the dispersed people of Israel. The King took them under his immediate

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protection. As society was still feudal, towns and lords were free to accept or not to accept Jews into their domains; but once they had been received and paid the annual fee, they were no longer free to dismiss them, except in the case of duly recorded misdeeds or misconduct. – The wandering Jew had no rights in the city, and remained despised and on the sidelines; but at least he would no longer be arbitrarily expelled. This is the first step towards stability and rest.

II

PERMISSION FOR EVERY JEW TO HAVE A DWELLING, I.E.
TO ACQUIRE, AS PROPERTY, A HOUSE AND GARDEN.

Louis XVI wanted to do better. He thought of organizing this stability.

What is the first means, what is the first mark of stability? it is to have a home.

The idea of a home is a sweet one to ponder! People today don't seem to understand what a good thing it is to have a home! In this restless, ever-changing society of the 19TH century, more like a nomadic tribe than a people of families united in a common homeland under its glittering exterior of luxury and pleasure, it's easy to get used to the idea of not having a home, of living wherever you find yourself, without a place because you have no affection, without a home because you have no family, and soon without a homeland because you have no memories and no hopes.

Until the advent of the Revolution in the world, that is, until the end of the last century, only the Jew knew the moral suffering of not having a home: a deprivation that seemed to all, and especially to the one who endured it, the hardest of sufferings. Twenty centuries have passed since the sweet words of the psalms: "How good it is, how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together", were fulfilled only by chance for this unfortunate people, and still on shaky ground! For them, for twenty centuries, there has been no habitation as such; for them, no dwelling!

We have compared the Christian people to Isaac, adding that the Jewish people, by ceasing to be God's people, had become Ishmael. The resemblance with Ishmael is particularly striking in terms of the wandering, wandering life. The Bible had said of Hagar's son: He will be a proud and wild man; he will raise his hand against all, and all will raise their hands against him; and he will set up flags against all his brothers.⁴² How literally all this was verified in the dispersed Jewish people! He became wild, unsociable, unable to confederate with any other people. his hands were against all, and the hands of

all against him. And then, despite the efforts of all these dispersed people to found fixed settlements, dwellings, they were always reduced, in the end, until the end of the last century, to having only huts and pavilions: He will erect his pavilions opposite all his brothers!

But then, with Louis XVI, the merciful thought of turning this pavilion into a home for them began to develop. Undoubtedly, the monarch took rigorous precautions to safeguard the heritage of the Christian people, which is why he did not allow Jews to acquire or own land. But, on the other hand, he pitied the wandering life of this poor people. So, while forbidding them legal possession of the Catholic soil of France, he endeavored to provide them with a home on that soil. So, notwithstanding Alsace's urgings to the contrary, the following article was inserted into the Letters Patent:

ART. XI. - Jews may nevertheless continue to acquire, as property, the houses necessary for their personal dwelling only, as well as the gardens adjoining them; provided, however, that these houses and gardens are proportionate to the condition and needs of the purchaser, which will be verified....

We just said: notwithstanding Alsace's insistence to the contrary. This province, which had so much to complain about Jewish usury, insisted that a distinction be made between town and country Jews: the former would be granted the right to own a house and garden, but the latter would be denied this right. Alsace hoped to free its countryside from usury and the presence of Jews. The lure of rest and a fixed abode in the cities would fill the void in the inhospitable countryside. The means was cleverly chosen. Louis XVI did not accept it. The government commissioners undoubtedly agreed with Alsace that it was desirable for Jews to reside "rather in cities where they can trade and be useful, than in the countryside where they have always been harmful" ¹ But as for granting a home to Jews who chose the cities, and refusing it to those who remained in the countryside, the monarch did not want such a cruel distinction. Unable to grant more than a house and a garden, he at least wanted every Jew to have "this house and this garden".

III

THEIR ADMISSION TO LAND CULTIVATION: A STATE
THAT ENGENDERS STABILITY. WHY THE PERSISTENT
INCOMPATIBILITY BETWEEN ISRAELITES AND AGRICULTURE?

They are forbidden to acquire French soil, but on this soil they can already have a home of their own.

Louis XVI wanted to go as far as possible in linking the Jews to the soil of France, which is why his government still offered them land cultivation.

The children of Israel have always been criticized for not liking culture. In fact, it has to be said that anything to do with the rural economy is currently as foreign to their tastes as it is to their knowledge. And this may seem all the more strange given that no people in Palestine were more devoted to working in the fields than the ancient Israelites. The Hebrew people were essentially agricultural.⁴³ In its economic part, the Law of Moses is a book of agriculture, by no means a commercial code.¹ How is it, then, that since their dispersion, the Jews have shown themselves to be so little cultivators?

Alas! they found themselves under constant threat of expulsion and dispossession, never sure of living in the land where they were tolerated the next day. And one hardly cultivates with taste an uncertain, inhospitable soil. This precarious situation made them much prefer the commercial state, where profits were much more certain, than the fruits of the earth, which could ripen by their hands, but not for them! Secondly, the soil belonged to the children of the family, to the Christians, and the Jews were too proud to cultivate as mercenaries, as serfs, a soil over which they had no rights. Finally, it has to be said – and this is a credit to human nature – that exiles are bad farmers. Only the soil of a homeland is stirred with affection. It is painful, especially when you are a child of Israel, to cultivate a soil that is no longer called the Promised Land. Since the loss of their beloved land, the Hebrew people have had no taste for cultivating any land. And just as, on the banks of the rivers

of Babylon, the hands of its sons refused to untie the harps that hung from the willows and remained stubbornly silent, so, for the past nineteen centuries, the hands of its sons have refused to handle farming implements in a foreign land. Who could blame them for missing the soil of their homeland?

These are the reasons why the Israelites stayed away from cultivating the land.

There were also reasons on the Christian side.

The secret memoir read before Louis XVI acknowledges that “if the Jews are not suited to agriculture, it is because they have always been forbidden the ability to engage in it. Perhaps, if it were restored to them, they would acquire in this respect the aptitude they lack. “1 In the centuries of the Middle Ages or of unmixed faith, but also sometimes harsh and bitter, it seems that one would have eaten with repugnance wheat that had been sown by Jewish hands, fruit that had been tended and harvested by the fingers of miscreants!

Louis XVI, who wanted to be as much of a father as possible, set out to put an end to these mutual, age-old repugnances. On the one hand, as a father who cared for his Christian children, he safeguarded their inheritance by forbidding Jews, as we have seen, the right to own land, the right to buy land. But on the other hand, by admitting the Jews to the cultivation of the land, by sharing with them the benefits and pleasures of agriculture, he flattered himself that he would settle the poor wanderers, soften their ills and almost make children of them! The Letters Patent therefore included this article:

Art. viii. – Let us allow Jews to lease farms, on condition that they remain on said farms and run them themselves. Let us also authorize them to lease, but to cultivate them themselves, vineyards, land and generally any other kind of land...

The monarch’s thought, apart from emanating from a fatherly heart, was very just. The best way to fix and civilize a nomad, whether a people or an individual, is to establish links between him and the soil. Whoever receives a field to cultivate undergoes a metamorphosis and takes on gentle, peaceful habits. By ceasing to be the cultivators of the Palestinian soil, the Jews had become wanderers,

vagabonds. As soon as they were brought back to cultivating the soil, shouldn't we hope to bring them back to civilization and stability? It was therefore a very just thought, as well as a very generous and paternal one. We don't doubt that Louis XVI had it. But we doubt he had the satisfaction of seeing it understood and put into practice by the Israelites.

Indeed, it is our firm conviction that the children of Israel will never decide to become farmers, even if they were legal owners; even more so, they will not do so if they are only tenants, as stipulated in the Letters Patent of 1784. Yes, even if they owned any foreign soil, no matter how productive, the Israelites would not willingly cultivate it themselves. Why not? Positivism, if consulted, would reply: Because for nineteen centuries, the aptitudes of this people have been entirely turned towards trade, and there is no turning back from a nineteen-century-old habit. We don't deny the value of this reason. But taking into account, above all, the supernatural and extraordinary side of the Israelite people, we add: There is such a connection between them and the Promised Land, that as long as they have the hope of seeing it again, they will never consent to devote themselves to the cultivation of another land. The story goes that during the Crusades, a knight disappeared without a trace, so much so that he was thought to be dead. His wife, however, would never consent to give her hand a second time, secretly hoping that she would see again the man to whom she had sworn her faith. She kept, as a means of recognizing him, one of the circles of a golden wedding ring, of which he himself owned the other part. One day, the faithful bridegroom returned with the revealing ring.... This is a touching and true image of the feelings of fidelity that God's ancient people retain for their Promised Land, the land God gave them! He hopes that one day it will be returned to his gaze and his tenderness; and therefore, any other land will hardly obtain from him his labor and his sweat!⁴⁴

Although the attempt was not crowned with success, it is only fair to recognize Louis XVI's magnanimous thought, and to thank him for having wished to improve the poor nomad's position, by

proposing to him the first relations with the soil of France: agriculture.

IV

FREEDOM OF ISRAELITE TRADE, DECREED BY LOUIS XVI.

Let's recapitulate what we have already seen in the paternal attitude towards the Jews in the Letters Patent of 1784.

Neither towns nor lords had the right to dismiss them arbitrarily, the royal power having taken them under its protection.

They can own a house and garden anywhere; they have a home.

They can take part in agriculture, by renting any kind of land.

These advantages were considerable. But Louis XVI, to whom the aptitudes of the children of Israel were well known, was well aware that the advantages he granted them in terms of fixity would count for very little, if they were not accompanied by benefits in the commercial sphere. So the generous monarch, who wanted everyone to be happy under his scepter and who, moreover, judged that, in the commercial sphere, there was no danger to fear for his Christian children, decreed complete freedom for Israelite trade.

A few explanations are necessary to understand the full extent of this new royal benefit:

For eighteen centuries, Israelites had been excluded from society; they could not hold any civil office, nor fill any liberal or honorable position. They were dead in the civil order. They communicated with society at only two points: taxes and trade.

Their taxes were crushing.

Excluded from all employment, burdened with taxes, did they at least have freedom of trade? Rarely, if ever.⁴⁵

At the end of the 15th century, their commercial situation was summed up as follows: "Condemned to pay gold for the foul air of the most insalubrious and secluded parts of the cities, reduced to buying withering protection, deprived of the exercise of arts and crafts, of all regular industry, and even, in several localities, of the sale of all new goods, the Jews had only two kinds of trade:

"For the wealthy class, among them: banking and foreign exchange, the supply of foodstuffs needed by the army, and the re-

mounting of cavalry;

“For the less affluent class: brokerage, horse trading, peddling and second-hand goods, small-scale traffic in old and second-hand goods, and weekly loans.

In our opinion, this limited mercantilism contributed in no small measure to the physical and moral degradation of the Israelite race. Firstly, petty trading always and everywhere gives rise to petty tricks and deceptions; loyalty is constantly at risk. Secondly, since the trade of junk dealer or peddler requires no apprenticeship, no development of the intellectual faculties, it follows inevitably that the qualities of the most gifted man wither away in such a profession. Is it any wonder then that, confined to petty trade, excluded from all that was broad, the Israelite genius sometimes debased itself? Is it not rather astonishing that it has remained so lively?

Well, it was Louis XVI who put an end to this desolate servitude, by proclaiming the freedom of Israelite trade.

In the Letters Patent of 1784, where, alongside severe precautions, we have seen so many signs of kindness, there is this last feature, this broad article:

Art. IX. – We permit Jews to engage in all kinds of trade, commerce and wholesale and retail trade, on condition that they comply with the regulations governing commerce. We further authorize them to set up factories and fabric mills, as well as forges, glassworks and earthenware factories, on condition that they obtain the permissions required for our subjects.

We couldn't have been broader. Undoubtedly, in these same Letters Patent of 1784, Louis XVI left the Israelites to bear the heavy exceptional taxes established by his predecessor kings. But if the Israelites were still burdened by separate taxes, they would at least find, in the freedom of trade, a means of paying them without suffering. What's more, with this decree allowing them to trade on a large scale, Louis XVI was restoring the Israelite genius, the genius of business, to its full flowering. Israelites, today you occupy the highest commercial and financial positions in Europe: if you want to be fair, you will recognize that the starting point of your prosperity was the decree of the generous Louis XVI.

However, the government of Louis XVI, in decreeing the freedom of Israelite trade, was concerned about an objection that could be made, and accompanied it with the appropriate response: it is worthy of the magnanimity and grand views of the monarch.

Here is the objection. It will be said "that the Jews, being naturally industrious and inclined to a thriftiness which sometimes goes as far as avarice, will be in a position to sell at a better price and to give more facilities for payment, than other craftsmen. They will therefore have great advantages over the latter, and this could lead to the ruin of.... " (the report names several localities in Alsace).

Now comes the answer:

"If the Jews find in their industry and economy the means to sell more cheaply, and to give greater facilities for payment than other craftsmen, this will be a real service to the public and to these craftsmen themselves, who will thereby be forced to become as industrious and as thrifty as their competitors."⁴⁶

With this disinterested and magnanimous response, the government of Louis XVI opened up the widest perspectives for commerce, recognizing and sanctioning what is at its heart: competition. O Louis XVI, how unjust are those who dare to say that you were the king of monopolies and privileges! You have been nothing but the guardian of everyone's rights, the prince of peace, the preparer of the rapprochement of hearts and the father of all!

We have finished examining the Letters Patent of 1784. Were we not right to assert that they contain, alongside the severity of justice, the thoughtfulness of mercy?⁴⁷

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V

WHAT A WELCOME THE JEWS OF THE TIME
GAVE TO THE LETTERS PATENT OF 1784.

But how were they received by the Israelites of the time?

The human mind is such that it no longer believes in the goodness of a plan, when it discovers that injustice has a part in it. In the Bible, we read that flies that die in perfume spoil its sweetness and its price.⁴⁸ It's true, one dead fly is enough to rob a bottle of perfume of its price, and a liqueur of its sweetness.

Such was the fate that the Letters Patent of 1784 met with among the Israelites. There can be no doubting the magnanimous goal they pursued, nor the paternal dispositions with which they were inspired. But because they contained an article of death, Article VI, which threatened the fecundity of marriages, they were generally rejected by the Jews, like a priceless liqueur.

They even sent a memorandum to the Throne, entitled: *Très humbles et très respectueuses représentations des juifs de la province d'Alsace, au sujet des Lettres patentes qui les concernent*. In this memoir, which we have also found in the Archives nationales,⁴⁹ the Jews plead their case in the name, alas! of philosophism. Reading this pleading, one is saddened by its emphatic tone. It is no longer the language of the sons of the Bible, nor even that of the Talmudists; it is the rationalist, humanitarian language that is beginning to be introduced into Israel. Nevertheless, their supplications regain a true and distressing accent, when they defend Israelite marriage against Article VI:

“Les suppliants oseront observera Votre Majesté que celte défense - de se marier sans l'agrément du Roi - est peut-être sans exemple dans tous les pays du “ monde....

“The holy laws which make marriage a duty for Jews, and which promise heavenly favors for fertility, are common to Christians...

“In the most brilliant century of the French monarchy, Louis

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the Great exempted fathers of families with ten children from the taille tax....

“Sire,

“Would it be possible, then, to make the Jewish nation a crime of this fecundity, sequel and guarantor of all domestic virtues? This is perhaps the first time that anyone has thought it necessary to warn a king to fear the increase of his subjects!...”⁵⁰

Had this plea been merely defensive, the Jews would have won their case before posterity; but it was unjustly aggressive. They, too, exceeded their goal.

Indeed, the brief contains the following lines:

“If one reflects on the necessity of a large population in the State, one is struck by the immense resources that Your Majesty could find in the prodigious fecundity of the Jewish people, who, led by their nature and religion, multiply unceasingly; while a considerable part of the Christian people go to annihilate themselves in cloisters and refuse the sweets of marriage, and the other cheats the vow of nature, in the bosom of marriage itself.... These truths, Sire, are too well known to appear bold in the mouth of a people reduced to extremity, and who see themselves threatened in their generations.”⁵¹

Yes, undoubtedly, the signatories’ despair was legitimate: we seem to see a lioness from the mountains of Judah defending her cubs. But why, in defending themselves, did they attack innocent people? Why this bitter criticism of cloisters and Christian virgins? There was no need, to defend his own fecundity, to hurl contempt and like a cry of hatred against beautiful Christian virginity. Is it not always Ishmael who never misses an opportunity to upset and hurt Isaac?

The brief in which the Jews defended their fertility and their beautiful families seemed legitimate, even eloquent. But with this sentence, a considerable part of the Christian people will be annihilated in the cloisters, it fell from our hands. In their turn, the Jews had recounted the apologue of the perfume “spoiled by a dead fly.”

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CHAPTER VI

THE CITY OF STRASBOURG UNDER SIEGE BY A SINGLE JEW THE SECRET SIEGE - 1767 TO 1784

I

SINCE 1589, THE CITY OF STRASBOURG HAS ENJOYED THE RIGHT TO HAVE NO JEWS WITHIN ITS WALLS. ORIGIN OF THIS RIGHT. HOW IT WAS EXERCISED: ANY JEW GRANTED PERMISSION TO SPEND THE DAY IN THE CITY WAS REQUIRED TO LEAVE AT DUSK AT THE SOUND OF THE HORN. THIS CUSTOM WAS STRICTLY OBSERVED FOR FOUR CENTURIES.

During the Middle Ages, Strasbourg was the least hospitable city to Jews. As early as the 14th century, say the chronicles, the Jews had given the city the strongest reasons to regard them as dangerous¹ It was claimed that pots full of poison had been found in Strasbourg's wells.² The people showed no mercy. They dragged the unfortunate Jews to their own cemetery, and burned them there in a plank enclosure, to the number of several hundred;³ to the number of two thousand, according to other historians, on a pyre erected in their cemetery.⁴

It is from this event that Brandgass (Burnt Street) takes its name.⁵

This dismal episode took place in 1549. Strasbourg was then a free city. It was governed by a senate.

The formal ban on Jews living in Strasbourg was linked to this date. The exasperated people demanded that their magistrates establish in law that no Jew would ever be allowed to live within the city walls, nor acquire property there.

From then on, this prohibition became part of the city's municipal law and constitutional law.

But the Jews did not give up Strasbourg. If we like to return to places where we have been happy, we are also attracted, in a mysterious way, to places where we have suffered; it's a law of human nature; misfortune also has its memories and its attractions. For the

sons of Israel, however, this melancholy reason had a positive side. The city's exceptional location, as a commercial hub between France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, undoubtedly also attracted them. When we study the progress of the Israelites across the nations, we ask ourselves how it is that they have always been so numerous in Alsace? One answer is this: in the Middle Ages, the Rhine was the most magnificent artery of trade.

A few years after the dismal episode of 1549, they were once again circling Strasbourg.

For its part, the city had agreed to relax its strictness a little. But this mercy was short-lived.

"In 1585, the city, having relaxed its rigor by again tolerating the temporary stay of a few Jews, was obliged to expel them because of their vexations. The fact is attested by Kœnigshoren, p. 114. 11 has not been admitted since that time. "1

It follows from this document and attestation that the people of Strasbourg - either as a result of a return to more humane sentiments, or because of the need for trade - had agreed to allow a few Jews to live there once again, but that they proved unworthy. It was at this point that the famous but humiliating custom of taking the Jews out every evening to the sound of the horn was regularized. The people of Strasbourg no longer burned them, but got rid of them every day at dusk.

The French National Archives contain a very old document which confirms all the above, and gives some very curious details about this horn, the signal for the Jews to leave the city.

"Although the origin of this horn, called Griselhorn - a trumpet sounded from the cathedral at certain times of the night - is not entirely certain, it is nevertheless to be presumed that it comes from the extermination and burning of the Jews accused of poisoning the wells, which took place on Monday, the feast day of Saint Valentine, in the year of our Lord 1549.

"It is still to be presumed that it was ordered that this horn be blown, to perpetuate the memory of this event; that for the same reason, as a result of the said proceedings, it was decreed by the then Grand-Senate that for a hundred years no more Jews would

enter the city: which decree, however, was limited in 1568. But as, in 1588, the Jews did not restrain themselves within the limits which had been prescribed for them, and were conniving with the enemies of the city and the country, the said limitation was annulled, and it was again decreed that at all times no Jew should dare to inhabit the city, which has been observed to this day. “1

Another document:

“History tells us that the magistrate was obliged to expel them from Strasbourg and forbid them to spend the night there. They were obliged to leave every evening at the sound of a bell, which gave them the signal. Since that time, not a single one has been allowed to remain in the city of Strasbourg. “1

And so, every evening, the Jews were obliged to leave the city when the gates closed. The signal is given from the cathedral belfry.

For a long time, a horn or a trumpet gave this signal.

Later, a bell was substituted.

The sound of the horn or of the bell, equally humiliating, signifies: Jews out!2

From 1589 to 1681, no Jew ever spent the night in Strasbourg. 3

II

THIS RIGHT WAS RESPECTED BY LOUIS XIV
WHEN STRASBOURG WAS REUNITED WITH FRANCE.
IN THE DAYS OF LOUIS XVI, JEWS CONTINUED
TO LEAVE THE CITY EVERY EVENING.

On this date in 1681, Strasbourg was reunited with France. Alsace had been ceded to Louis XIV under the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). Strasbourg, however, was not included in the cession. But in 1681, it was conquered and willingly incorporated into this great kingdom. In its new situation, would Strasbourg modify its harsh municipal law regarding Jews? Will its strict right to exclude them lose its rigor?

No.

It is important to be clear about the conditions under which Strasbourg became part of France: the clarity of the famous debate we are about to present depends on it.

The city of Strasbourg, as we have said, was originally a free city, governed by a Senate.

Towards the end of the 14th century, it became a German imperial city, but still enjoyed territorial superiority. Territorial superiority, in the Middle Ages, was a kind of power by virtue of which certain cities of the empire could coin money and exercise all regal rights.¹ At this time, there was a heated dispute between the emperor and these imperial cities over the admission of Jews. "The people, ruined by their usury, had driven them out. The Jews tried in vain to buy the emperor's permission to reside in Germany. The result of this quarrel was a double right attached to territorial superiority: that of not being forced by the emperor to receive Jews; and that of admitting them without his assistance."² "Strasbourg, having become an imperial city, had carefully taken its place in that legislation. The Emperor's power would not have been able to prevent the sounding of horns and the expulsion of Jews every evening!

Now - and this is what the reader should note and remember - when Strasbourg accepted its incorporation into France after

the Treaty of Westphalia, it asked Louis XIV as a condition that its municipal law would be respected. Louis XIV promised to do so. This respect included his attitude towards the Jews. "When it gave itself to Louis XIV, and was "confirmed in all its rights and statutes, that of ex-"during the Jews from its bosom was one of the most precious" in scs eyes, since it guaranteed it from a scourge under "which groaned a part of Alsace, with which "its particular constitution has nothing in common. "1

By the time of Louis XVI's reign, which is the subject of our investigations, we can see in the chronicles that the promise made to Strasbourg was honored. The ancient municipal law is still in full force. No Jew may acquire property in Strasbourg, nor live there. The bell rings every evening in the cathedral belfry, warning the sons of Israel to leave. The only relief they have received since Strasbourg's reunion with France is this: "All the grace we have shown them" up to the beginning of the present century (eighteenth century), when they have been unable to finish their business during the day, is to assign them an inn where they can spend the night. But the innkeeper is obliged to report them. "2

In support of this softening and the rigorous precautions that surrounded it, Strasbourg's chronicles cite what happened in 1705, during the War of the Spanish Succession, when the army required that a few Jews in charge of supplies reside in Strasbourg. In agreement with the commander, the city allowed them to stay for a time "on condition that they leave as soon as the war was over".1 This they did in 1715. From that time until 1745," add the chronicles, "no Jews resided in the town "2.

So, in short, by the time Louis XVI became king, no Jews had yet lived freely in Strasbourg. The contract between Louis XIV and the city had been strictly and loyally respected.

III

THE JEW CERFBEER. HIS HOME AT THE GATEWAY TO STRASBOURG, IN THE SMALL VILLAGE OF BISCHHEIM; HIS NOBLE FIGURE, HIS SERVICES AND HIS CREDIT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF LOUIS XVI. HE UNDERTOOK TO DO AWAY WITH THE OUTRAGEOUS CUSTOM, AND TO ESTABLISH HIS RESIDENCE IN STRASBOURG.

One league from Strasbourg, in the small village of Bischheim, there was, at the time of Louis XVI, a good Israelite figure. The memory of the Alsatian people still preserves his memory, under the name of grandfather Cerfbeer.³

Cerfbeer had settled near Strasbourg with his entire family, which was very large. At the 1784 census, Bischheim contained one hundred Israelite families, or 570 individuals. Of these, 80 were children or grandchildren of Cerfbeer, or related to him.¹ He was truly the ancient patriarch, surrounded by his family like a fruitful vine.

Supplying the cities, especially the king's armies, was his occupation, his stall. He had rendered great service to the kingdom. During the food shortages of 1770 and 1771, the province of Alsace was indebted to him for considerable convoys of grain, which he had brought from abroad. His Majesty then entrusted him with the administration of fodder for his mounted troops in the two provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. He had long been fulfilling this important function, to the great satisfaction of the king and his ministers.² This Jew was by no means vulgar. Gifted with a noble physiognomy, bent on polite manners because of his relations with the dignitaries of the Elal, he had been able to bring out, in this contact, the great qualities of his race: rare sagacity for discovery, promptness in execution, habit of vast plans and of what is universal (for the dispersed Jewish people had been thrown, as it were, into the universal), energy and perseverance to achieve the goal: such were the aptitudes that distinguished Cerfbeer. He was also recognized for his honesty in his choice of means. Louis XVI held him in high esteem. He conferred on him the official title of Director General of Military Forages. His

excellent reputation had also won him the confidence of other princes: he was commercial advisor to the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, the Palatine House of Deux-Ponts and the Princes of Nassau.¹

Appreciated and honored on the outside, Cerfbeer was held in no less esteem within the Israelite community. With his in-depth knowledge of the rules of the Pentateuch and the prescriptions of the Talmud, he was a just and patriarchal man who was often chosen as an arbitrator by his co-religionists. In the delicate trial we are about to see between the city of Strasbourg and him, and in the sometimes heated debates that will accompany it, the lawyers on both sides will agree that their client or opponent is a man of integrity in the Israelite community. “Magistrates throughout Alsace are so convinced of the rigor and uprightness of their principles, that they are willing to defer to Cerfbeer’s decision when there is any dispute between a Christian and a Jew, or when a Jew has been guilty of embezzlement “2.

But what set Cerfbeer apart most of all was his heart’s desire to rehabilitate Israel.

11 was the first to dispel prejudices against his brothers.³ His ambition was to lift them out of their degradation. He set up factories in Alsace, preferentially employing a large number of his co-religionists, with the aim of removing them from their sordid trade, and thereby overturning the prejudices of their accusers.¹

Such was Cerfbeer’s appearance: wealthy, influential, benevolent, honored by the confidence of Louis XVI. Well, despite his titles as director general of military fodder, and commercial advisor to the Landgrave of Hesse, the Duke of Deux-Ponts and the Prince of Nassau, he is obliged every evening to leave the streets of Strasbourg with the other Jews at the sound of the bell. Twice a day, he has to walk a mile to Bischheim. He has his number at the auberge de faveur. But one evening, his soul rebelled, and he resolved to lay siege to Strasbourg.

IV

AT FIRST, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE DUC DE CHOISEUL,
HE WAS ALLOWED TO SPEND THE FIRST WINTER
THERE, AT NIGHT AS WELL AS DURING THE DAY.

The opportunity presented itself to him, quite naturally, in the winter of 1767. The country was infested with brigands. Cerfbeer rightly claimed, according to some - "in a rather clumsy manner",³ - according to others, that the small village of Bischheim offered him little protection from thieves; and, as a result, he asked the magistrates of Strasbourg for permission to take refuge and reside in the town, during that winter.

His request to the magistrates is dated August 5, 1767,

Here is his petition:

Mémoire du sieur Cerfbeer, August 5, 1767.

"On representations made to Messrs. the magistrates of Strasbourg by the said Cerfbeer, that numerous bands of brigands infest the country, that they are especially after the Jews, and that they are especially to be feared during winter, when the length of the nights will make it even easier for them : the aforementioned Cerfbeer begs to be allowed to take refuge with his family and his best effects in the city during the winter, renting a bourgeois house there, submitting to do no trade contrary to the statutes, and keeping his house in Bischheim to return to after the winter, and after calm against the robbers is restored: he hopes that the grace he asks for will be granted. "1

The Strasbourg magistrates had no intention of granting the pardon; in December, they had not yet responded.

The Minister of State at the time was the Duc de Choiseul. One day, the magistrates received this letter from Versailles.

"Versailles, January 22nd 1768.

"Gentlemen,

"I must confess that, after examining the considerations you have put forward

Cerfbeer, I see nothing to support them. From the fact that people

of his nation must have neither offices nor counters in Strasbourg, it does not follow that you cannot allow this Jew to remain there during the winter season; any exception to the rules is commonly regarded as confirmation, because it contains recognition and admission. But it is so slight in the present case, that it can scarcely cause the slightest sensation; for it is not a question here of tolerating a constant domicile for Cerfbeer, but a momentary dwelling, which the sole motive of humanity should lead to granting. Moreover, you are in a position to take the necessary precautions to prevent or repress any abuse on his part, and I am convinced that these reflections will lead you to think that the permission he needs does not suffer from any real difficulties.

Signed: Le Duc de Choiseul. "1

This letter was granted, and Cerfbeer moved to Strasbourg with his family and his best effects, during the winter of 1767-1768.

V

THEN, THANKS TO THE SUPPORT OF THE MARQUIS
DE MONTEYNARD, TO SPEND THE SUMMER THERE.

When summer returned, the fear of thieves was no longer a factor. Moreover, in his letter of protection, the Duc de Choiseul had spoken only of a temporary home. Finally, Cerfbeer had said very clearly that he was keeping his house in Bischheim to return to after the winter. All this did not prevent poor Bischheim from being neglected and, after the winter stay in Strasbourg, the son of Israel from longing for the summer sojourn.

This time, it was the Marquis de Monteynard who intervened as protector, to obtain it.

Letter from M. le marquis de Monteynard to M. le Préteur Royal de Strasbourg.

"November 5, 1771.

"The Jew Cerfbeer has already obtained, Sir, permission to reside during the winter in Strasbourg, where his presence is also necessary during the summer; the King does not consider that the difference in seasons should oblige this individual to change domicile, and his intention is that he remain in the city throughout the year; this is what I beg you to kindly inform the magistrate of.

"I am, "1 etc.

Strasbourg's magistrates replied:

"Monseigneur,

"November 20, 1771.

"Although this Jew, by the placet he had addressed in 1767 to M. le duc de Choiseul, and by the request he had presented to us, had committed himself to remain in this city only during the winter, we had not thought of worrying him, even during the summer; we will worry him even less, Monsieur, since your orders; we dare, however, to hope that this exception in favor of the Jew Cerfbeer will not draw any consequences for the extension of his residence beyond the term of his business of supplies for the King's service.

"We are" etc.

But Cerfbeer is in the right place, and all he can think about now is staying there and consolidating his position.

VI

CERFBEER WENT ON TO ACQUIRE, IN THE GREATEST
 SECRECY AND UNDER THE NAME OF A THIRD
 PARTY, A BEAUTIFUL HÔTEL IN STRASBOURG.

It was on November 20, 1771 that he obtained permission from the city's magistrates to extend his residence in Strasbourg, in summer as well as in winter; and already, on January 16 of the same year, that is eleven months in advance, he, a mere tenant by grace, acquired, but in the greatest secrecy, and under the name of a third party, a building located in Strasbourg. 11 is only a tenant by grace, and in the greatest secrecy he becomes the owner.

This acquisition remained concealed and hidden for fourteen years. Here's how:

The property was the Hôtel de Ribeaupierre on Quai Saint-Louis in Strasbourg. It belonged to His Serene Highness the Duke of Deux-Ponts.¹

The Duc de Deux-Ponts agreed to sell the hotel to the Chevalier de la Touche, Lieutenant General of the King's armies.

The Chevalier de la Touche in turn sold the property to Cerfbeer under private seal.

The contract of sale from the Duc de Deux-Ponts to the Chevalier de la Touche was executed by a Strasbourg notary on the morning of January 16, 1771;²

And the private transfer from Chevalier de la Touche to Cerfbeer took place on the same day, January 16, 1771, and was deposited with a notary in Colmar.³

Was the Duc de Deux-Ponts aware of the transfer of his hotel to Cerfbeer? There is no written proof of this, but it is more than likely. The most familiar relations existed between the noble duke and Cerfbeer. After all, Cerfbeer was His Highness's commercial advisor!

So, the sale of the property to a third party, a secret transfer, the two contracts signed with two different notaries, one in Strasbourg, the other in Colmar: certainly, with such precautions, one could be assured of mystery!

So when, fourteen years later, the Strasbourg magistrates only learn of it, there is no word too strong in their mouths and pens to stigmatize the conduct of their audacious tenant. They will say: the Jew's maneuvers... his tricks... he used cunning and walked in darkness.¹

Cerfbeer, for his part, defended himself by saying that he needed the house to serve the King.²

VII

A SERIES OF RENTALS, DISGUIISING HIS ACQUISITION
AND PREPARING HIS ENTRY AS OWNER.

The property is acquired. His secret position secured, Cerfbeer proceeds with a series of rentals in other parts of the city.

What was the purpose of this series of rentals?

Undoubtedly, to find, first and foremost, more convenient and larger accommodation for his large family; but also to distract public attention, which he feared would be aroused, from the acquisition he had made; and also to prepare for his entry as owner.

So, on July 21, 1777, he presented a request to Messieurs de la Chambre des Treize – as the Strasbourg magistrates were known – in which he humbly begged them to allow him to rent, in addition to the house he already lived in himself, two other houses to accommodate his two sons-in-law, Alexandre Lévy and Wolf Lévy.¹

The good magistrates granted his request and allowed him to rent two houses in the rue des Serruriers for his two sons-in-law.²

Some time later, the two houses were no longer suitable, and a new request was submitted for permission to exchange them (March 12, 1778).

The good magistrates authorized the exchange.

The first son-in-law, Alexandre Lévy, exchanged the house rented on rue des Serruriers for a house located behind the Saint-Louis church; and the second son-in-law, Wolf Lévy, exchanged the house also rented on rue des Serruriers for a house on rue Sainte-Elisabeth.¹

These two houses,” says a contemporary Cerfbeer book, “were more beautiful, larger and more convenient for his family.

“But all this was just an artifice to disguise the acquisitions.

“So here we have three large houses already invaded by Sieur Cerfbeer and his family, in a town where they don’t even have the right to pernoct” (spend the night).²

We stop. In these three big houses, we stood still as if in a camp, until a favorable incident allowed us to move forward. The expected incident was the death of the Chevalier de la Touche,

the complaisant third party, the simulated purchaser of the Hôtel de Ribeaupierre.

VIII

HE REVEALS HIMSELF AS THE OWNER OF THE
HOTEL. THE INDIGNANT MAGISTRATES OBJECTED:
A CONTRACT MADE BY A JEW TO BECOME THE
OWNER IN STRASBOURG WAS NULL AND VOID.

Chevalier de la Touche, Lieutenant General of the King's armies, died in 1784. His succession began. At this point, Cerfbeer presented himself as the sole and legitimate owner of the Hôtel de Ribeau-Pierre, and produced the title deeds.

The astonishment of the magistrates was not small. One can easily imagine. Their indignation was no less. They recalled and commented on everything that had happened over the past fourteen years: Cerfbeer had initially asked for permission to move from the small village of Bischheim to Strasbourg, to avoid the thieves, he said: although he had paid his rents and acquisitions exactly, had he not nevertheless acted like them in the dark? And the comments went on!

The magistrates immediately objected to this acquisition of the Hôtel de Ribeaupierre. In the present case," said their protest, "even a Christian, who did not have the right of bourgeoisie or special permission, would be unfit to acquire this property: under no pretext is a Jew susceptible to such permission. "1 The deed of acquisition was therefore declared null and void.

IX

COUP DE THÉÂTRE: CERFBEER DEPLOYS THE
LETTRES PATENTES DE NATURALISATION HE HAS
OBTAINED FROM LOUIS XVI, AUTHORIZING HIM TO
ACQUIRE LAND THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM.

A dramatic turn of events: Cerfbeer presented the Strasbourg magistrates with the Letters Patent of Naturalization he had obtained from Louis XVI, by virtue of which he was graciously granted the right to live in and acquire land throughout the kingdom.

“The refusal of the magistrates to recognize the acquisition of the Hôtel de Ribeaupierre forced Cerfbeer, according to the memoirs of the time, to lift his mask and present the letters of naturalization he had obtained several years earlier “1.

These Letters Patent of Naturalization, requested from the kindness of Louis XVI, bear the monarch’s signature and the date 1775.

The Hôtel de Ribeaupierre had been acquired in 1771.

Consequently, it was only four years after secretly acquiring the Hôtel de Ribeaupierre that Cerfbeer asked the King for the grace to become the owner. When he obtained it, he let another nine years elapse, until 1784 – when the succession of the Chevalier de la Touche was opened – to discover both to the magistrates that he had acquired the Hôtel de Ribeaupierre, and that he had obtained Letters Patent denaturalisation. He undoubtedly hoped that time, confusing in the already distant past the date of the acquisition of the hotel and the date of the granting of the Letters Patent, would cause them to be accepted simultaneously, and erase the imperfection of the means and procedures. It was a clever move.

As an impartial writer, we confess that our pen is embarrassed as much to excuse as to condemn Cerfbeer.

His aim is laudable: to do away with the outrageous custom of sending Israelites back to Strasbourg every evening to the sound of the horn or the belfry bell. But the means employed to achieve this are tortuous. They are those of a siege.

To maintain our esteem for this tireless athlete, we needed to

find words as flattering as the following in the Letters Patent of Naturalization.

“Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and Navarre...

“Wishing to bestow upon Sieur Cerfbeer a particular testimony of the satisfaction We have for the services he has rendered and continues to render to Us, with as much zeal and intelligence as disinterestedness and probity. For these reasons and by special black grace, We have granted and do grant to the said Cerfbeer, to his children born or to be born in lawful wedlock, the same rights, faculties, exemptions, advantages and privileges enjoyed by our natural or naturalized subjects. Consequently, we allow the said Cerfbeer to acquire by purchase, donation, bequest, inheritance or otherwise, hold and possess in our kingdom all property, movable and immovable, of any nature whatsoever.

“Donné à Versailles, l’an de grâce 1775, au mois de Mars.

“Signed: Louis. “1

X

PROTEST FROM THE MAGISTRATES; THE
CASE GOES TO VERSAILLES.

Louis XVI's benevolence towards Cerfbeer was well known. Nevertheless, the deployment of the *Lettres royales* was a thunderbolt. By opposing Cerfbeer's acquisition of the Hôtel de Ribeaupierre in Strasbourg, and denying him ownership, the magistrates had hardly expected such an ally to come to their rescue.

The Council of the Thirteen, however, was not fazed. Sound your horn more loudly, O Strasbourg, and the bell of your belfry! Don't let a Jew force your doors or insult your rights! The Council immediately protested against the extent to which Cerfbeer wanted to extend the King's favor. Let the Letters Patent authorize this Jew to reside and acquire land throughout the kingdom: that's possible. But to settle in Strasbourg, no! for Strasbourg has its own rights and franchises, which were respected by Louis XIV and will be respected by Louis XVI!

A protest to His Majesty was therefore drafted, stating: "That His Majesty had been surprised," and that if His Majesty had thought that the main effect of these Letters Patent would have been to fall back on Strasbourg, His Majesty would have, of his own accord, excepted a city whose constitutive laws carry a formal exclusion from this dangerous nation¹. "1

And the protest left for Versailles.

CHAPTER VII

THE CITY OF STRASBOURG BESIEGED BY A SINGLE JEW CONTINUED THE PUBLIC SIEGE (1784-1789)

I

A CURIOUS TRIAL AND AN INCREDIBLE SITUATION:
THE KING HAPPENS TO BE CERFBEER'S JEWISH ALLY
BY SIGNED LETTERS, AND STRASBOURG, BY ATTACKING
THE JEW, RUNS THE RISK OF ATTACKING ITS KING.

This trial between a Jew who has managed to enter a city closed to those of his race, and the city that wants to get rid of the Jew, is certainly unique. The authentic details are piquant and instructive. At a time when Jews are invading and occupying the avenues of the social order, isn't it curious and interesting to be able to contemplate, in this shortened Strasbourg siege, the great siege they are currently making of civil society?

Cerfbeer, it must be admitted, has maneuvered with an off-line address. Not everything he does can stand up in broad daylight, nor is it worthy of praise. It's fair, however, not to forget the difficulties and delicate aspects of his situation. He's an outcast who's tired of walking. He's an outcast who no longer wants to endure exclusion. He's a man who is thrown out every night, just as cattle are herded out at the end of the day, and who wants to be able to sleep in a man's house in Strasbourg. 11 took the liberty of taking detours and resorting to trickery to achieve his goal. As Director General of Military Forages, he knows the proverb: "In war, it is permissible to deceive". It's a real siege he's undertaken. He thinks he's excusable, up to a point.

Cerfbeer feels well supported. The finest names in France surround him with their credit, seem to guess and encourage his plan against Strasbourg, while this plan is still secret, and will support it openly, when it is declared and discussed at Versailles, in the

Sovereign's Council. The Duc de Choiseul has obtained Cerfbeer's winter residence in Strasbourg. The Marquis de Monteynard won him summer residence. When the Hôtel de Ribeaupierre was secretly acquired, it was a lieutenant-general in the King's armies who lent him the cover of his name. His Serene Highness the Duke of Deux-Ponts, to whom the property belonged, consented "to this sale of which she was certainly not unaware. During the proceedings at Versailles, other great names declared their support for the Israelite cause: Marquis d'Argenson, Maréchal de Contades, Comte de Ségur and Comte de Brienne, both successively Ministers of State. How, in the company of such fine names, could Cerfbeer think himself short of honor? But it seemed to us the height of his skill that he was able to get King Louis XVI on his side.

Indeed, what a singular spectacle! Here's a city, Strasbourg, which since its incorporation into France has become perfectly French, totally devoted to the monarchy; only it doesn't like Jews, it doesn't want them. Well, a son of this race has maneuvered so well, that at one point we see this incredible situation: the King on the side of the Jew by signed letters, and his good city obliged, by attacking the Jew, to take sides against its King.

This is a unique episode, a trial like no other. In terms of jurisprudence, the *mol habile* has two meanings: *être habile à...*, i.e. to have rights; and *être habile*, i.e. to display skill, to know what to do. Cerfbeer, as a Jew, was not clever enough to become a landowner in Strasbourg, so he used cleverness in the other sense, in the sense of skill: he knew how to do it, and the King is with him!

II

THE BATTLE BEFORE THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

The battle began in 1784, and when the Revolution of 1789 broke out, Strasbourg and Cerfbeer were still busy fighting.

Brought before His Majesty's Council, the dispute was defined as follows:

Strasbourg offered the King:

"Not to trouble Sieur Cerfbeer and his children in the three houses they currently occupy, on a rental basis, for as long as Cerfbeer is in charge of His Majesty's fodder business. But once the business was finished, he would leave the city. "1

Cerfbeer requested:

"The execution of the Letters Patent, pure and simple, i.e. that: having pleased His Majesty to grant him letters of naturalization and to admit him to the number of his subjects, there was no longer any difference between him and the other subjects of His Majesty in all that concerned the rights of regnicole (inhabitant of the kingdom); that consequently he had become French, and had no less than any other French subject the right to live in Strasbourg, like any other city. "2

As we can see, Cerfbeer, as a skilful belligerent, now neglects all the details of a slowly conducted siege and goes straight to the heart of the matter, to the goal he is pursuing: the right to live in Strasbourg. His opponents have criticized him for lifting the mask. He does, for he declares "that it is essentially and solely for those places where he had to fear resistance and obstacles, consequently for Strasbourg, that the Letters Patent were obtained. "1

Such was the debate brought to Versailles, with lawyers chosen on both sides.²

The King's Council had a big deal on its hands, and had to read many petitions. We have rediscovered all these files at the Archives Nationales, covered with both the dust of the battle and the dust of a century that has since passed, and after having scrupulously examined them, we believe we can explain and clarify this interesting

debate as follows.

III

CERFBEER'S ARGUMENTS AND HIS REPROACHES
OF STRASBOURG: REPROACH OF REBELLION
TO THE KING'S SOVEREIGNTY; REPROACH OF
EGOISM; REPROACH OF INHUMANITY.

Cerfbeer's arguments:

He accused the city of Strasbourg on three counts: rebellion
against the King's sovereignty;

egoism;

inhumanity.

A. Rebellion against the King's sovereignty.

TO THE KING

and to Our Lords of his Council

"Sire,

"It is clear that the magistrates of Strasbourg dispute Your Majesty's right to reward the suppliant in the place where he has had the honor of serving Her. What! the royal authority, which has so much power to punish crime, has none to reward service or virtue?

"Is it not singular to see a Jew stipulating the "interests of the State? And why not, since the "government has stipulated them with him, these interests!.... "1

This argument was extraordinarily clever. Cerfbeer aroused and piqued royal jealousy by complaining that the magistrates of Strasbourg wanted to prevent the King from rewarding a subject as he saw fit.

But the same argument of offence to royal sovereignty is used with even greater force by him, when he denounces Strasbourg's ancient and rigorous custom with regard to Jews. "The magistrate of Strasbourg has only one resource for challenging Sieur Cerfbeer's right granted by the Letters Patent, and that is to challenge His Majesty's right to derogate by particular exceptions from the general regulations of the cities or provinces of his kingdom, and to assess in his justice and wisdom, the reasons which must give rise to these exceptions. This is also what he does when he challenges the authority and execution of the Letters Patent granted to Sieur Cerfbeer.

He contests His Majesty's very right of sovereignty, with that of making, authorizing or modifying regulations that may concern the safety and tranquility of his subjects. Thus, in defending his rights, Sieur Cerfbeer is only defending those of His Majesty."⁵²

Obviously, Louis XVI was somehow obliged to help Cerfbeer and show himself to be his ally: aren't the rights of the Crown defended in the camp of Israel? Cerfbeer had maneuvered so well, that the Strasbourg magistrates were forced to meet the royal person, before reaching the Israelite. He is not afraid to highlight, with a certain malice, their claim to refuse what His Majesty has decided in his Letters Patent;² and a summary of the whole question, presented by his lawyer, begins with this triumphant interrogation, embarrassing for his opponents: "Does the King enjoy the rights of sovereignty over the city of Strasbourg? yes or no?"⁵³ The whole weight of the case is carried by him on this side, and it's clever!

B. Another argument he develops against Strasbourg is the reproach of egoism.

He, Cerfbeer, supplies fodder to His Majesty's troops in the province of Alsace. Strasbourg is more convenient, even necessary, as a center of operations for this service to His Majesty. But Strasbourg, taking advantage of an outdated custom, makes endless demands on the Israelite's favored residence, and hinders his operations. Isn't this selfishness and narrow-mindedness? Doesn't it make the general interest of the kingdom yield to the particular interest of one city?¹

Cerfbeer develops this argument with great gusto, carefully intertwining it with the king's sovereignty, a point of support he never lets go. "The so-called privilege (of excluding Jews) claimed by the Strasbourg magistrate, even if it existed, could only have as its motive and object the public interest of the city. But isn't the public interest of a particular city, like the public interest of the kingdom, subject to the wisdom and authority of His Majesty? Is it not for His Majesty, his ministers and his Council, to establish the rules as well as the exceptions and mitigations that this interest may require? Are not this right and care the attributes of sovereignty? And when

His Majesty has judged that Sieur Cerfbeer deserved to be admitted to the rank and prerogatives of one of his subjects; when he has judged that this admission was not harmful to the public interest, and perhaps that he was in favor of it; when finally His Majesty has judged it appropriate to grant this favor to Sieur Cerfbeer, derogating from all rules and laws to the contrary? Is it appropriate and does it belong to the magistrate of Strasbourg to rise, under vague pretexts, which are foreign to sieur Cerfbeer, against this decision and this act of kindness, justice and sovereignty of Your Majesty. “ C. Finally, Cerfbeer puts forward the accusation of inhumanity. The basis of his reasoning is false; but his conclusion is beautiful and touching.

The basis is false, because he casts doubt on the episode of 1549: the burning of the Jews by the people of Strasbourg in their own cemetery. What!” he writes, “magistrates would have allowed two thousand men to be burned, on a simple accusation which could only have concerned the smallest number of victims, which was not susceptible of proof, and which offers only the height of absurdity (the poisoning of wells)? Such a judgment would have been a thousand times more criminal than the alleged crime. But to impute this execrable inhumanity to fanaticism, the father of so many horrors, would be to slander it. Let the magistrates of Strasbourg succeed in proving the authenticity of the fact, and the supplicant consents to stay away from their walls forever. “1 Perhaps there was some skill

to cast doubt on the burning of the Jews, to relieve Strasbourg of the memory of this lamentable execution; but it was obviously contrary to history. The city’s old archives were no lie; and, besides, the name of rue Brûlée (Brandgasse) given for several centuries to the former site of the Jewish cemetery was a testimony to the dismal episode of 1549.

The rest of Cerfbeer’s reasoning is clear: Why establish, and why maintain, on the basis of a crime and absurd reprisals, a custom as inhumane and outrageous as that of expelling Jews from the walls of Strasbourg every evening?

His conclusion is very touching. He begs Louis XVI to free not only Cerfbeer, but all his brother Israelites. “The supplicant is not unaware that there are many individuals in his nation as worthy of

Your Majesty's graces as he is. He takes heaven as his witness that he would rather receive this favor with his brothers than alone. But it is not for him to plead such a fine cause, and whatever Your Majesty's views may be, whether through a residue of pity for old prejudices, She wishes to elevate the Jews only by degrees to the rank of citizens; or whether Her powerful hand is preparing to suddenly break the bonds that hold this unfortunate people in misfortune : the suppliant can only throw himself confidently at Your Majesty's feet to claim the effect of the Letters Patent which She deigned to grant him in 1775, and whose execution is opposed only by pretexts which attack His very authority and rights of sovereignty. "1

We'll have to come back later to these eues de Sa Majesté, to which Cerfbeer alludes. Let's confine ourselves here to the assault on Strasbourg.

Once again, it's all very clever. Louis XVI is obviously embarrassed. Let's take a look at the defense of Strasbourg.

IV

STRASBOURG'S DEFENSE: IT PUTS FORWARD ITS OLD MUNICIPAL RIGHT, AND SHOWS THAT ITS KINGS AND THE GOOD KING LOUIS XVI HAVE ALWAYS RESPECTED IT, BUT THAT CERFBEER DARES TO GIVE THE LETTERS PATENT HE HAS OBTAINED AN ARBITRARY AND PERFIDIOUS EXTENSION.

Above all, Strasbourg protests, but with nobility, its submission to the will of its Sovereign, and rejects, as it should, Cerfbeer's reproach of rebellion.

"Sire,

"The efforts made by Strasbourg to counter the violence done to it by Sieur Cerfbeer's desire to establish himself and his large family there in spite of his wishes are not, as he claims, culpable resistance to sovereign authority. The magistrate of Strasbourg respects the Koi's wishes too much to oppose the graces he is willing to grant. He is not contesting Cerfbeer's letters of naturality, nor his permission to acquire real estate in the kingdom. Its sole object is that the city of Strasbourg be maintained in the right it has enjoyed since time immemorial to keep out of its walls and lands under its jurisdiction all Jews who wish to settle there. "1

Strasbourg protested its submission and loyalty. This duty fulfilled, this concern removed, it vigorously and clearly brought its old municipal law into line. Cerfbeer, in his aggression, had covered himself with the King's sovereignty as if it were an aegis, and had based his attack on the rights of the Crown: Strasbourg, on the other hand, wraps itself in its old municipal law, and bases its defense on its franchises, respected by the emperors of Germany and the kings of France. Are the Letters Patent," she says, "which give Cerfbeer the right to reside in France and acquire property there, supposed to have derogated from the rights of a city which has special statutes prohibiting the Jewish nation? One could not adopt the affirmative 1. without authorizing a violence destructive of all principles; 2. without annihilating the Sovereign's commitment to the city to maintain its ancient rights and statutes; 5. without violating the public law of

Germany, of which Strasbourg was a part. "1

This is clear and firm.

But having thus put forward its municipal law as a visible bulwark that cannot be forced, Strasbourg in turn shows itself to be very skilful, as skilful as Cerfbeer, by in no way questioning the King's 'justice and goodness towards it by respecting and maintaining its statutes: "How can we conceive that a just King would want to afflict his city of Strasbourg?"⁵⁴ Who then is the culprit? Who is the sower of discord, the troublemaker? Is it not this Jew, whose maneuvers are three times criminal? Indeed:

A. He has given the Royal Letters an arbitrary, perfidious extension. If the Sovereign had wanted to confuse Strasbourg in the effect of the Letters Patent, he would have made express mention of it. It is therefore the Israelite who has given them an arbitrary extension "over a city which is not only not included in their provision, but which could not be included in it".¹ So the city "does not attack, in any way, the Letters granted by the King; it lets them stand in all their provisions: only, it wants to prevent the unjust extension that Cerfbeer wants, on his private authority, to give them".²

B. By acting as he did, this Jew abused a pardon, to the prejudice of a third party."⁵⁵ "There is no maxim more certain than that no pardon is ever granted to the prejudice of a third party. As soon as the interest of another may suffer, the injured party has the right to claim: and it is a mockery, on Cerfbeer's part, to say that the City is rebelling against the sovereign authority because it wants the promises made to it by the Sovereign to prevail over the whim of a private individual who wants to abuse a general pardon to come and settle in a place where municipal law repels him. "4

Finally, what are the names of the procedures Cerfbeer used? They are unspeakable...

Strasbourg's defense was, as we can see, firm, skilful and respectful; it dismissed the King's person with respect, and did not spare Cerfbeer.

54

55

V

STRASBOURG ALSO RESPONDED INDIGNANTLY TO
ACCUSATIONS OF SELFISHNESS AND INHUMANITY.

Where Cerfbeer is not spared is when Strasbourg, after defining and claiming its rights, responds to the reproaches of selfishness and inhumanity.

Response to the reproach of selfishness. Cerfbeer, as we have seen, had accused Strasbourg of selfishness because, he said, in the whole affair, it was putting the general interest of the kingdom ahead of its own. The city's pride revolted: "Thus," it cried, "it is from a Jew that the government will learn that the good of the State requires that the general laws of France be repealed, and that our Kings were wrong to forbid Jews, on pain of death, to reside in their States! It is to be hoped that these wise laws will not be revoked on the political considerations of *Sieur Cerfbeer*, and will forever guarantee the kingdom from Jewish invasion.

"In vain would we try to reassure the city of Strasbourg against the scourge that threatens it, by telling it that the admission of a single Jew cannot alarm it, nor will it have any consequences. We can already see what this one Jew has done... Other Jews will ask for the same grace, based on alleged services rendered to the troops: as if the French nation lacked men intelligent enough to make the same supplies; as if Jews were capable of rendering the slightest service without being paid a hundredfold in advance. Didn't Cerfbeer himself make an immense fortune supplying our armies? And should he still be rewarded for this? Is it necessary that, in order to give in to his obstinacy in remaining in Strasbourg, the Sovereign undermines the constitution of this city, forgets the commitments he has made to preserve its ancient rights, and consents to receive leeches who must bring misery and despair to his fellow citizens? In a word, it is not a new right that she wishes to acquire, it is not a special privilege: it is a right of which she has been in possession from time immemorial, a right guaranteed to her by the solemn promises of a

Sovereign whom she cherishes.”⁵⁶

Strasbourg’s pride bursts forth in these lines, as does its indignation. They rise to the level of wrath. Despite its resolve to stand respectfully aside from the royal person of Louis XVI throughout this trial, this royal person, it must be admitted, is somewhat offended. Does Strasbourg not offend the King when it says: “In order to give in to this Jew, the Sovereign must undermine the constitution of this city, forget the commitments he has made...”. But she falls viley at his feet, when she adds immediately afterwards: “Her right is guaranteed to her by the solemn promises of wi Sovereign she cherishes.” How beautiful it is to see respect shackling wrath, and obedience kissing the hand that has stretched over the head of a Jew whom one would like to chase away!

Response to the accusation of inhumanity. – There’s no other way to do it! “Let him stop trying to make the magistrate odious by crying inhumanity, and moaning about his nation’s misfortunes. When this nation no longer has the principle of violating the rights of humanity itself, by ruining through its rapine the peoples imprudent enough to tolerate it; when it has ceased to deserve the status of declared enemy of the Christian name, given to it by Louis XIV in his edict of March 1685; when the Jews have ceased to devour by their usury the lands where they are suffered: this nation will be able to invoke the feelings of humanity due to all men. Then the city will cease to regard them as capable of abusing the imprudence of the people, the youth, and the numerous soldiers it contains within its walls, to enrich itself with their substance.

“In Strasbourg, there are few criminal trials for usury or swindling in which Jews are not perpetrators, accomplices or receivers. – In such cases,” we are told, “do good justice! – But will punishing the guilty restore the fortunes of those they have ruined? Is it not wiser, more humane, to remove arsonists than to wait until they have consummated their crime before punishing them? The Council itself was obliged to come to the rescue of the people of Alsace, on whom the Jews had made debts of nearly ten million. These enormous debts had reduced these people to such despair, that they were induced

to take advantage of the talents of a few forgers to obtain receipts for what they owed. The disorder was so great that the Superior Council was obliged to grant debtors extensions of time on several occasions, and to hear a number of criminal cases: and we will be told coldly: admit the Jews to Strasbourg... oh no!"⁵⁷

VI

EMBARRASSMENT FOR THE KING AND HIS COUNCIL.

Is it any wonder, after all that we have just reported, that the King and ministers at Versailles found themselves faced with a decision to make? The King wanted to reward Cerfbeer and take advantage of this reward to raise the Israelite to the rank of citizen; but he didn't want to displease and irritate Strasbourg! The royal signature has opened up the whole kingdom to Cerfbeer; but Strasbourg refuses to open up by virtue of its old municipal law! If the king gives in and stops the effect of his Letters Patent before the gates of Strasbourg, he will appear to be no longer Sovereign. If he demands and extends their effect beyond the gates, ordering Cerfbeer's peaceful residence in the city, he is breaking with commitments made by the Crown, breaking with the past and providing a pretext for revolution: for, despite the city's attachment to its king, despite the efforts it is making to retain obedience, it is clear that resistance is to be feared; irritation pierces through the formulas of respect.

The situation thus became very delicate, and the embarrassment at Versailles must have been extreme. Three things prove that the King and his Council were perplexed.

Firstly, the time taken to study the case. The case was brought to Versailles in 1784, and was not yet over when the Revolution of 1789 took place.

Secondly, authentic documents frankly admit this embarrassment. Among the paperwork in the voluminous dossier are two confidential letters addressed to Maréchal de Ségur and Comte de Brienne, both successively ministers and secretaries of state. They had sent a secret commissioner to Alsace to study and arrange the affair. The commissioner replied as follows:

Letter to Marshal de Segur.

"At Strasbourg, August 20, 1786.

"Monseigneur,

"I have received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 8th of this month, concerning the discussion relating to

Sieur Cerfbeer's Letters Patent. I am obeying the order it contains by sending you my opinion. According to the manner in which you have kindly explained this matter to me in person, I have made various attempts to bring the magistrate to conciliation: my multiplied efforts in this regard have been unsuccessful. After much deliberation and consultation, the magistrate believes himself to be right in this matter. Moreover, like the entire bourgeoisie, he regarded the legal admission of Jews as a scourge that would destroy commerce, industry and good order.

"This disposition of minds, Monseigneur, confirmed me in the thought that this cause should be treated and decided contradictorily rather than by administration. As this form gives the parties the means to develop all their reasons, none of them has the right to complain, and the Strasbourg magistrate will thereby be particularly protected from the reproaches of the bourgeoisie.

"I am with profound respect,

"Monseigneur,

"Your most humble and obedient servant.

"Signed: Gérard."⁵⁸

The other letter is addressed to the Comte de Brienne, who the following year, 1787, had succeeded the Maréchal de Ségur as Secretary of State. Word was spreading in Strasbourg that Cerfbeer was going to win his case; the same secret commissioner hastened to address this letter to the minister:

"A Strasbourg, December 28, 1787.

"Monseigneur,

"The city lawyer has just informed the magistrate that you have ordered him to return the papers relating to Cerfbeer to his offices.

"I cannot express to you, Monseigneur, the consternation this order has spread among the magistrate and the bourgeoisie. It is assumed that this Jew's cause is being considered favorably. I dare tell you, Monseigneur, that the whole city is alarmed; but we still believe we can hope that, since the King treats his people with such benevolence, His Majesty will not want to use his absolute authority to violate a privilege granted by the emperors and confirmed by the

capitulation of 1681 (when Strasbourg surrendered to Louis XIV). The bourgeoisie feared this event as the most destructive scourge to be apprehended.

“I am with infinite respect,

. “Monseigneur,

“Your most humble and obedient servant.

“ Signed: Gérard.”⁵⁹

On Gérard’s own letter, we found these words in the handwriting of the Comte de Brienne, indicating to his private secretary what he had to reply.

Reply: The fears of the city of Strasbourg are premature; a step which only tends to accelerate the investigation of an affair should in no way presume the judgment which may be passed.⁶⁰

These documents obviously prove that Versailles was embarrassed.

But what confirms our assessment is, thirdly, the absence of a judgment. We have found no such conclusion in the documents in the file. The Comte de Brienne’s drowning said: “The judgment that can be made. It was not. What remains to be said about this curious trial will prove it peremptorily.

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VII

CERFBEER'S BOLD MANEUVER: HE MOVES FROM THE SIEGE OF STRASBOURG TO THE SIEGE OF THE WHOLE OF SOCIETY BY INSINUATING TO THE KING AND THE COUNCIL OF STATE THE PROJECT OF EMANCIPATING THE JEWS. THIS TIME, HE SUCCEEDED.

Although no judgment was passed, we can nevertheless guess that Louis XVI and his Council were inclined towards Cerfbeer. This is clearly evident:

Firstly, from the considerable time taken up by the trial. Had Strasbourg won the case, would it have been dragged out to such an extent?

Secondly, the confidential letters quoted above: their content is favorable to Cerfbeer;

Lastly, the consideration due to the Royal Majesty: Louis XVI wanted to remain and appear sovereign, and he appeared even more so by maintaining his protection for Cerfbeer.

Indeed, the Letters Patent of naturality granted to Cerfbeer had been signed in 1775. In order to prove the Israelite wrong, the royal signature, dated fourteen years earlier, would have had to be overturned and, in a way, dejudged. But this was impossible. Strasbourg no doubt suggested an expedient, saying over and over again in all his petitions that the King's religion had been taken by surprise by this Jew. But the argument was invalid. Cerfbeer had been supplying fodder to the King's armies for many years, and the Sovereign appreciated him. By rewarding him. Louis XVI may not have thought of Strasbourg, but by withdrawing his Letters Patent or limiting their effect, he would have given the impression that his signature had been affixed without thought or precaution. The Royal Majesty could not have wavered. It therefore seems to us, if not obvious, at least more than probable, that Louis XVI wished to maintain for Cerfbeer the full extent of the favor granted in 1775.

On the other hand, it is clear that the sensitive and benevolent monarch must have found it difficult to accept the idea of so deeply

upsetting his loyal city of Strasbourg. His situation was similar to that of the King of Spain, who wanted to marry a Jewess and make her queen, because of her beauty: Sire, you cannot sacrifice Spain to a Jewess.⁶¹ Here, though in a different order of ideas, the solicitations are no less anxious or pressing. Numerous petitions arrived from an entire city, begging Louis XVI: Sire, you cannot sacrifice Strasbourg to Cerfbeer.⁶²

This explains the absence of a judgment in this case.

Rewarded without being able to put his reward to good use, favored without being able to enjoy his favor, Cerfbeer had a bold idea. There's a saying in colloquial parlance: *Faire un trou avec sa tête dans les montagnes*, to signify a violent effort against a seemingly insurmountable difficulty. With his hard head, Cerfbeer decided to turn against the whole Company, to try to make a hole in it. He had laid siege to Strasbourg, and despite his royal ally, Strasbourg persisted in closing its doors to him, refusing him a home. By a strategy that necessity suggested to him, but in which there was certainly a permission from Providence, he moved the siege in front of the company. The Jews," he said to himself, "are not citizens; they must become so. If I succeed, Strasbourg will be forced to open its doors to me. If I succeed, it won't just be me, Cerfbeer, who will be able to reside and acquire property in Strasbourg, but all Jews; acquire property in Strasbourg, and everywhere!

As you can see, the struggle was enlarged. This man was to become a real force for property rights. Thwarted in Strasbourg after twenty years of effort, he was not discouraged; but with a bold conception and maneuver, he laid siege to the company. This time he succeeded.

Louis XVI, to whom he certainly did not reveal the full extent of his plan, was not unaware, however, of Cerfbeer's lactic news, and his maneuver to overcome Strasbourg's old municipal law. Not only was the King aware of it, but he didn't even seem to disapprove. Two testimonies vouch for this.

The first is Cerfbeer's final supplication. Read it again above (p.

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124). The Israelite tells the Sovereign: "... Whatever may be Your Majesty's streets, whether out of a residue of pity for old prejudices, She wishes to elevate the Jews only by degrees to the rank of citizens, or whether Her powerful hand is preparing to suddenly break the bonds that hold this unfortunate people in misfortune. ... "1 Such language proves beyond doubt that, while the struggle was still going on between Strasbourg and Cerfbeer, Louis XVI was already aware of the intrepid Israelite's efforts to raise the issue to a higher and wider level. The monarch had obviously agreed to this; otherwise, Cerfbeer could not have spoken so confidently of His Majesty's streets in his supplication. These views he lent the King proved that there were ideas under consideration, and even talks in progress. Another passage in the same supplication makes it clear that Louis XVI knew everything, and approved of everything: the suppliant "hopes that a public law will no longer leave any pretext for the city of Strasbourg, or any other city, to treat an unfortunate nation so harshly, and that no special grace will be needed for the Jews to be among Your Majesty's subjects."⁶³

Moreover, there is a second, even more formal testimony to Louis XVI's consent to this way of ending the struggle between Strasbourg and Cerfbeer; the reader will find this testimony set out at length in the fourth part of this volume: it is the project for the emancipation of the Jews, officially put under study by order of Louis XVI.

And now for some food for thought.

When the debate between Cerfbeer and Strasbourg turned into the question of the general emancipation of the Jews, were there direct talks between the Monarch and the Israelite? We find this hard to believe, and there are no records to suggest that there were. One, though very good, was the King; the other was only a humble Jew. But God's Providence, when it wishes to reconcile extremes, to bring together that which is very low with that which is very high, creates sublime intermediaries, hyphens that are like the expression of his smile of mercy. The hyphen created by God between the King and the Jew was to be Malesherbes.

BOOK TWO

APOLOGY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S CONDUCT
WITH RESPECT TO ISRAELITES IN THE PAST

IMPORTANCE OF THIS RETROSPECTIVE LOOK TO
UNDERSTAND THE GRAVITY OF THEIR ENTRY INTO
SOCIETY

CHAPTER I

THE CHURCH TRANSFORMS AND MADE SOCIETY HAPPY ITS ADMIRABLE EQUITY TO JEWS

I

THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ELUCIDATION OF THE CHURCH'S PAST INTERVENTION BETWEEN CHRISTIAN POPULATIONS AND JEWS.

When we highlighted the wisdom and prudence contained in the Letters Patent of 1784, we pointed out, in passing, the high influence that the Church's advice had exerted with kings and peoples, in the question of the Jews: advice usually heeded.

At a time when the situation of the sons of Israel is about to become quite different in modern times, it is vital to examine directly and thoroughly this intervention of the Church in the past.

What did this intervention consist of? In what way and under what circumstances? Was it successful for the Jews? Was it equally happy for nations and populations? Did the Jews complain about the Church? Do Christian populations owe it gratitude? So many delicate points, today obscure, on which it is important to have precise data. When, in the course of this book, we have seen the Revolution break down barriers, and the Jews incorporate into society without the Church having to interfere, it will be easier to judge, thanks to the clarifications acquired in the chapters that follow, whether the Jews, and also the Christian nations, have lost or gained by getting rid of the Church's intervention.

II

THE EVANGELICAL RULE WITH WHICH THE CHURCH HAS GRADUALLY TRANSFORMED THE WORLD: GENTLENESS TOWARDS PEOPLE, FREEDOM TO ACHIEVE FOR MERIT. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THIS GRADUAL, MAGNIFICENT TRANSFORMATION.

It can be said that, when Christianity manifested itself to the world with the mission of procuring its very earthly happiness, it entered society in the form of an extremely gentle and suave breath that wanted to reach its goal slowly, gradually and, by the same token, surely. The goal, full of charity and humanity like the breath itself, was this: gentle morals to replace pagan, barbaric and savage morals everywhere; and classes open to all to replace closed classes and castes. In other words, Christianity set out to rebuild a humanity worthy of the name, through the softening of morals and the freedom to achieve.

Let's take a closer look at these two works of Christianity.

I . - The flowering of gentleness, or the gradual softening of morals under the influence of the Gospel, is one of the most beautiful things to be admired in history. The benefits of the Christian religion cannot be emphasized enough.

In terms of this softening of morals, we need to distinguish four eras:

The first is the old world, where supreme joy, festivities and public pleasure were linked to violent death. Ten thousand men in the empire die in public for Nero's feast. Pure satanic reign.

Then appear, with the gentle figure of Christ, the apostolic times, during which the sowers, i.e. the apostles and their successors, sow everywhere the seeds of goodness, mercy and benevolence contained in the Gospel: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. - It was said to the elders: Thou shalt not kill. But I say to you all: Do not be angry, and do not say an offensive word to your brother. - Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; remit, and it will be remitted to you. - The little ones, the weak, raise their heads under this dew of light; the strong lose their hardness,

morals become less cruel. "For us," said one of the apologists of the first centuries, "we make little difference between killing a man or watching him being killed. "1

Then came the peoples of the Middle Ages, half defeated by the Gospel, who nevertheless maintained torture for the accused, and atrocious torments for the guilty. Still a barbaric reign, but one mingled with the idea of justice.

Finally, in modern times, there has been a visible and undeniable blossoming of goodness in public mores. A radiant character of gentleness has come to embellish the face of the human race, even though this world is still oppressed and defiled by Satan, and "this vile and stupid spirit, this homicidal satyr," still dances there, in blood and tears, his "lascivious, beastly and ferocious dance, which defiles and "crushes" us. "2

Christianity is often criticized for not having transformed and softened morals more quickly, so much so that Jews argue that "the Messiah has not yet come": since there are still wars, cruelties and atrocities!

This reproach is as unfair as it is unintelligent.

It ignores the tactful action of Christianity, as well as the tenacity of passions and cruel instincts in human nature.

To gain acceptance and succeed in transforming everything, Christianity has had to be blunt. When it came to the fore, it found itself up against two immense moral hardnesses: Roman society, in which refined voluptuousness was combined with the most atrocious cruelty; and the barbarians of the North, whose ferocious mores made us shudder. We have no hesitation in acknowledging that Christianity has proved to be the religion of the Messiah, because, mingled with these two immense hardnesses, these cruel elements, it has produced the miracle of a society which, little by little, has been transformed, showing itself, under its action, first less and less ferocious and harsh, then more and more gentle and merciful.

Divine action and divine results! Christianity began by doing what it set out to do. To achieve the softening of morals, it proceeded with gentleness itself, rushing nothing, but always spreading out as oil does.

This is the only honest way to explain how the world was able to pass from selfish epochs and centuries of iron, where ferocity and the abuse of force crushed everything, to these mixed epochs where, alongside torture and terrible torments, we meet with relief chivalry, God's truce, a thousand charitable institutions;

And mixed times, in these propitious times of ours, when we can happily greet the blossoming of those fruits of light and gentleness that are called :

The recognition of human dignity;

The obligation to treat him with respect, to address his mind through reason rather than his body through violence;

Controversy subject to fixed rules of kindness;

Penitentiary regimes substituted for the dungeons of the old dungeons;

And finally, the thousand nuances of compassion and gentleness in relationships that have emerged "as conditions have become more equal "1 , as "Christianity has equalized conditions and dominated passions", we would say more aptly, it seems.

Yes, Christianity is indeed the religion of the Messiah come, since slowly but surely it has universally softened mores. The Church of Jesus Christ alone has performed this miracle, alone has achieved this honor. The breath of charity and humanity issuing from her lips was the breath of a virgin in her delicacy, of a mother in her mercy!2

II. - All that can be said in praise of Christianity, with regard to the softening of morals, must be repeated, following the same pattern, with regard to the freedom to achieve. We couldn't resist the satisfaction of repeating the praise. It's so sweet to be grateful, especially when the blindness of nineteen centuries has led an entire people, alas, to ignore the benefits of the divine Christian religion!

First of all, here's how the Christian principle was announced: Open classes! Pagan practice, on the other hand, had been this: Closed classes, castes!

Nothing is more opposed to the spirit of the Gospel than closed classes and castes. Christianity wants anyone who is worthy and has rendered service to be able to move from a lower to a higher class. This freedom of advancement is a breath from the shores of eternity,

when Christ descended to ennoble all human nature by becoming man. Since then, every man has remained capable of being of a great race. Christ ascended to the heavens: in his footsteps, his brothers and sisters, even the smallest pins, can soar into the celestial regions, and even more so into the social regions. He was the universal emancipator, the universal regenerator, the universal hope, the universal charity! He left no door closed, he opened them all, in heaven, on earth and in hell! He created the freedom to ascend and reach.

This is the principle. In the light of this principle, we can distinguish, as in the case of the softening of morals, four successive eras.

First, the old world, where everything is divided by caste, by category, where everything is walled in, confined, inflexible: slaves remain slaves, Romans remain Romans, Jews remain Jews.

Then comes the apostolic era, or the transition to the new world, during which the apostles and their successors spread these ideas, these seeds everywhere: "That all souls are born equal; that the human person is a dignity; that the Christian above all is a supereminent dignity; that the slave has a right to sacred things, a right to the family, a right to life and honor, a right to rest; that work ennobles man and makes him deserving." To these new accents, slaves, herdsmen and ploughmen lovingly kissed their instruments of labour, sanctified by the God who suffered and worked; masters and the powerful, fascinated by the sweet vision of Christ, bowed with respect and kindness to their inferiors: distances began to disappear.

Then comes the age of flowering or the Middle Ages. Freedom to achieve is far from being established, and its blossoming is still a long way off, but what progress is being made! But alongside these social imperfections, we see guilds, trades, brotherhoods, franchises, communes and free towns. The classes are still rigidly closed, the lord is confined to his castle, and the villain remains the villain; however, the classes exchange affection, lend each other help and family support. For feudalism is fundamentally a vast and genuine family organization. The lord helps and loves his people; the castle protects the hut; wealth smiles on poverty; and poverty, for its part, respects and blesses wealth: protected and content, the man in the hut multiplies his work; little by little, he overcomes and transfigures his

poverty. Who presides over this progress, this flowering? the Church.

Finally, with modern times, the freedom to achieve blossoms in all its magnificence. All avenues are open. Just as the angels climbed up and down the ladder Jacob saw, so all the rungs or degrees of society are available to the sons of mankind without exception. This state of affairs is called civil equality and political liberty. To whom does the honor of this blossoming belong? The present hour, the hour of darkness and lies, answers: to the Revolution. Hopefully, the end of the century will say: to the Catholic Church!

Here we come back to the same objection to the softening of morals: why did Christianity take nineteen centuries to bring equality and freedom? Can true religion be so slow in achieving such important results?

It's easy to come up with several good, solid answers. We invite the reader, especially if he or she is an Israelite, to ponder them.

Christianity has been slow to bring about the blossoming of freedom, because the God of Christians, who is also the God of nature, has followed the same law with regard to Christian society that He laid down and followed with regard to nature: the law of germination or progress, whose applications are so magnificent! In nature, plants are first seed and germ, then stem and leaves, then flowers, then fruit. In the same way, in Christian society, with regard to freedom and equality, there was first seed, then sprouting, flowering, and finally blossoming and enjoyment. The Catholic force has acted within humanity in exactly the same way as sap does within nature, that hidden but powerful force that makes everything germinate, blossom and bear fruit. Both work in a divine silence, a fertile silence, so aptly named the silence of good things, which in humanity as in nature, slowly but surely prepares rich blooms and splendid creations. In nature, flowering is tormented by cold and storms; social flowering is no less tormented by passions. This explains the delay of freedom, which, like the fruit on the plant, has only appeared after many shocks and trials.

Christianity has been slow to bring freedom to fruition, because God wanted to renew for the messianic kingdom, with which the Church is entrusted, the same course He followed for the messian-

ic childbirth, with which the Synagogue was entrusted. From the vocation of Abraham, to whom the Messiah was promised, to the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem, no less than two thousand years have elapsed: all this great lapse of time used to prepare his blood, his ancestors, his coming, his childbirth! Is it any wonder, then, that God also took two thousand years to make the Messianic Kingdom blossom and expand, with charity, freedom and equality as its finest fruits? Does anyone who still belongs to the Old Testament really take offence at this length, this duration? Is not a kingdom to extend more difficult than a birth to produce? And yet to produce the birth of the Messiah promised to Abraham, God took two thousand years!

C. Christianity has been slow to bring about the blossoming of freedom, because, for freedom as for the softening of morals, it has wanted to do nothing abruptly, to disturb nothing in the course of secondary causes, taking account of environments, epochs, nations, races, interests and characters, not repressing them, but making the most of them to achieve its great goal. "Christianity did not want to attempt to change the world by a sudden upheaval; it had the inspiration to condemn itself to conquer slowly, patiently. "1 God is patient, because he is eternal: so is Christianity. Since his works must be crowned by eternity, he puts time into them. We are struck with admiration when we consider how tactfully, carefully and securely the Church has nurtured and developed this twofold freedom: the freedom of self-possession or freedom of the human person, and the freedom to achieve. How eloquent is this successive, gradual transformation from slaves to serfs, from serfs to colonists, from colonists to owners, from owners to bourgeois, and from bourgeois to that third estate which was one day to become the master? If we look closely, the emancipation and perfection of peoples was achieved according to the rule set out in the Bible: suavely and strongly,¹ with delicacy and safety.

Such is, in itself and in its course, the breath of humanity, brought to us from divine shores, in the pages of the Gospel. For nineteen centuries, this breath has played out in beneficent orbs around the nations; and insinuating itself through these two beautiful and holy things, the softening of morals and the freedom to achieve, it is

gradually moving the world from a less and less harsh and selfish state to one that is more and more suave and fraternal.

III

TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE CHURCH APPLIED THIS
EVANGELICAL RULE TO THE JEWS: GENTLENESS IN
DEALING WITH THEM MUST BE PERFECT; BUT FREEDOM
TO ACHIEVE, IN AN EMINENTLY CHRISTIAN SOCIETY,
CAN ONLY BE IMPERFECT AND LIMITED FOR THEM.

But does this generous Christian approach, "gentleness in dealing with people, freedom to achieve for merit", also apply to the Jews? On the contrary, weren't these poor people constantly excluded from gentle treatment and freedom to achieve? A precise answer is important, so many historians' judgments have been erroneous, through bad faith or lack of research.

Well, no! the breath of humanity brought by the Gospel did not turn away from the poor Jews, even though they kept themselves apart from Christian society, out of hostility to it, and also to better practice their Jewish law. The breath of humanity did not neglect them. For Christianity, separation exists only on the other side of time; here below, everywhere and always, it strives to bring people together!

Precautions, however, had to be taken with them.

It was obvious that the Catholic Church could not adopt the same feelings of trust or the same line of conduct towards them as towards peoples who had been baptized or were ready to be baptized. It was also clear that it had a duty to protect the Christian society that was being formed under its auspices from their hostilities. And so, as soon as the young Christian society was in the process of being formed, the rule of conduct adopted and decreed by the Church with regard to the Jews was this:

Procedures inspired by gentleness, for their persons: let them be perfect! No difference between them and other men.

Freedom to arrive: for them, it can only be imperfect and limited. This double rule was eminently wise.

In fact, when it came to procedures inspired by gentleness, the Church reasoned as follows: the Jews are men; they are unhappy;

they are still dear to God, because of their fathers.¹ How could I, the mother of mercy, fail to feel sorry for them, for their miseries? And how could I fail to use with them all the procedures, all the kindness required by their rank as men, their situation as unfortunate and lost, their literalness as the ancient people of God?

These arguments of mercy are to be found on every page of Church history, whenever the unfortunate remnants of Israel are mentioned.

But the Church added, with regard to the freedom to succeed: the Jews may have merit and incomparable aptitudes; but that's not the question. The question is this:

On the one hand, the society being formed, under my auspices, between the various nations who have become my children, is an eminently Christian society, essentially Christian, uniquely Christian;

On the other hand, the Jews persist in disregarding Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind, and the mission I have entrusted to them; they are the declared enemies of the Christian name, Christian morals and Christian laws;

Consequently, there can be no freedom for them, in such a society, which is my concern, to go up and down. We might as well bring wolves into the fold, darkness into light, hatred into love.

Consequently, the most attentive precautions must be taken to stop them at the entrance to the avenues of society; and the vigilance of the guards cannot be too attentive so that there is neither surprise on the part of the Jews, nor slackening on the part of those whose duty it is to watch.

Nevertheless:

Whereas the Jews, scattered everywhere, are, by that very fact, mixed up in everything; whereas points of contact cannot be completely avoided between Christians and them; and whereas, moreover, the exchange of services is equally demanded on both sides :

Full permission for Christian princes and Christian populations to have recourse to the Jews for all appropriate services, to be rendered or received. But express and severe prohibition to introduce them into anything that concerns the very constitution of Christian society. Let them be its auxiliaries, since they cannot be its elements!

Such was the Church's reasoning on the delicate question of the relationship between Jews and Christian society. Christianity aside, it only takes a sensible mind to recognize that the Church had not only the right, but the duty to act in this way. Full of mercy for their persons, she stopped their steps at the entrance to the avenues that led to the heart of society. The Jews didn't complain. They understood that they were unfit to perform the social functions in which the Christian conscience had to constantly assert itself.

In the eyes of the Church, their situation was quite similar to the one they had once made for themselves to the Gabaonites. At the time of the conquest of the Promised Land from the peoples of Chanaan, Israel had received orders from God to exterminate all these peoples. The inhabitants of Gibeon managed, by a stratagem, to make a covenant with Joshua.¹ When their deceit was discovered, they were given life, for the sake of the sworn covenant, but Joshua and the princes of Israel decreed: "This is how we will treat them: 'They shall laugh in such a way that they will be employed in cutting wood and carrying water for the service of all the people.'" In the Church's view, Jews will be treated in the same way, but in a more gentle and honourable way - because the human race has come under the Law of Grace and Mercy: they will trade, bring in goods, serve the Christian people; in a word, they will be allowed to perform all the services of the outside world, but will be carefully forbidden those which concern the inside of Christian society.

Let us note, however, an essential difference, admitted by the Church, between them and the Gabaonites:

The Church awaits this day of mercy with joyful hope, and if it has been forced to stop them for a long time, with severity, at the gates of society, it will entrust to them, when they return to Jesus Christ, its Gospel and its own defense.

This is how the breath of Christian humanity and charity with regard to the Jews must be understood, in its beneficial orbs and also in its severe but salutary repulsions. We shall now see it inspiring the facts of history and arriving, from century to century, up to the eighteenth century, the more special object of our study.

CHAPTER II

THE GENTLE AND CHARITY USED BY THE POPE AND THE CHURCH AGAINST THE JEWS

I

FIRST GOOD PROCEDURE: PERFECT RESPECT FOR
THEIR FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE AND THE EXERCISE
OF THEIR RELIGION. TOUCHING EVIDENCE.

The Church's first delicate and merciful action towards the Jews was to respect their conscience and their religion.

It would seem that if, in order to save their souls by putting an end to their darkness, the Church had sometimes shown itself to be a little pressing, departing, out of tenderness, from the rules of moderation, it would have been excusable. But no, the Church needs no excuse, because she has never strayed from the role of reverence, exemplified by God¹. She has been able to reconcile and unite, in perfect balance, concern for their eternal salvation with the respect due to their freedom of conscience. May our humble but profound testimony serve to justify God's holy Bride, as she awaits the general judgment!

The Church's situation was all the more delicate, and consequently her conduct all the more admirable, because, while the Jews opposed her obstinacy, under her own wings the nations converted from paganism often showed themselves fanatical, eager, in their young faith of still wild neophytes, to want to communicate to these obstinate people their lights and their consolations. As soon as a people had been converted, they believed that they, in turn, should convert the Jews: and these hard heads exasperated them. So many excesses were committed! How many troops of pilgrims, of enthusiastic crusaders, thought they were pleasing heaven, and getting off to a good start in their endeavours, by forcing the Jews to receive baptism! But the indignant Church closed heaven, by fulminating excommunication, to those who wanted to open it in this way to the Jews. She stopped

arms armed with holy water with as much indignation as if they'd been armed with a sword. And yet, God knows, she was eager for the conversion and salvation of the remnants of Israel!

To make it easier to judge the Church's admirable conduct on this question of the Jews, full of both respect for their freedom of conscience and zeal for their salvation, we have drawn two synoptic tables: they illuminate and complete each other.

FIRST TABLE

EXPRESS PROHIBITIONS

BY WHICH THE CHURCH PROTECTS AND ENFORCES THE FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE OF JEWS

AND THE EXERCISE OF THEIR RELIGION

1. No forcing them to embrace the Christian religion

A. "We must call them to the unity of the faith by gentleness, persuading them and giving them charitable advice. Violence is apt to disgust those who are attracted by gentleness and charity". (Order of Saint Gregory the Great).

All popes have been careful, on occasion, to repeat these magnificent words of Saint Gregory the Great.

B. " ... Although they would rather persist in the hardening of their hearts than seek to understand the secrets of their Law and come to the knowledge of Christ, they are no less entitled to our protection. And so, as they cry out for our help. We take them under the aegis of our protection... And, following in the footsteps of our predecessors of happy memory, Calixtus, Eugenius, Alexander, Clement and Celestine, We forbid anyone to force a Jew to be baptized, for he who is forced to do so is not supposed to have faith." (Ordinance of Innocent III.)

"Nicholas III issued a bull in favor of the Jews, a rare monument of tolerance in these times of religious hatred and persecution (13th century). A copy on parchment, which once belonged to them, is kept in the Trésor des Chartes in Paris. With this bull, the Pope reminds the clergy that the Christian religion commands leniency, and that this is the example set by his predecessors, the Calixts, the Eugenes, the Alexanders, the Clement, the Celestines, the Innocents and the Honorees". (Depping, *Les Juifs dans le moyen âge*, p. 465.)

D. "Of all sovereigns, there has hardly been one whose rule has been gentler to the circumcised than that of the Popes: They allow them full freedom of conscience." (Basnage, Protestant author, *Hist. des juifs*, t. IX, 2nd part, chap. xix.)

2. No removal of their synagogues

A. "Pope Alexander III, despite the troubles of his reign, was able to protect the Jews and consolidate their privileges... He forbade the removal of their synagogues. But at the same time, he ordered that they could not possess the churches by right of pledge or sale". (Basnage, *Hist. des juifs*, l. XIII, chap. xu. - *Beggxot, les Juifs d'Occident*, p. 156).

Saint Gregory the Great had made the same defense. "He condemned the bishop of Terracina, who had removed from his diocese a synagogue established by the laws, and who had expelled the Jews from another place, where they had retired to pray to God". (Basnage, t. XII, chap. xu.)

B. The historian Basnage, in his own time (xviic century), wrote the following: "We wanted to gain a more accurate knowledge of the number and present state of their synagogues in the ecclesiastical state. There are nine in Home, and nineteen in the countryside, thirty-six in the March of Ancona, twelve in the Patrimony of St. Peter, eleven in Bologna, and thirteen in the Bomandiole. This enumeration shows that there are still a considerable number of synagogues in the part of the world where the Roman Church reigns with most authority". (T. IX, 21' part, chap. xxxn.)

3. No disturbance of their Sabbaths and feasts

A." Let no one disturb them on their feast days, either by beating them or throwing stones at them; and let no one impose on them during these days any work they may do at other times. Those who contravene these prohibitions will be excommunicated". (Ordinance of Innocent III.)

B." In various places, the people of Italy beat the Jews with sticks, and prevented them from celebrating their feasts with stones. They took their complaints to Pope Alexander III, who granted them his protection, forbidding them to be disturbed by insults in the celebration of their Sabbaths or in the exercise of their religion."

(Basnage, t. IX, 1re partie, chap. xii.)

4. Ban on disrupting or desecrating their cemeteries

"Urban II liked to recall the charitable protection that several of his predecessors, the Calixts, the Eugenues, the Alexanders, the Celestines, the Innocents, etc., had granted to the Hebrews; and, as this people had invoked his authority to be guaranteed against fanaticism, Pope Urban forbade mistreating them, despoiling them, desecrating their cemeteries." (DeppIng, p. 4G7-4G8.)

Nicholas III had made the same defense. "These unfortunate people were beaten with stones or sticks, their dead were dug up, their resting places were disturbed. Nicholas III pronounced ecclesiastical penalties against anyone who desecrated their cemeteries." (Ibid., 466.)

5. No change in customs

"No Christian should allow himself to change their customs without legal judgment." (Ordonnance d'innocent III.)

Almost all these prohibitions are accompanied by this sanction: on pain of excommunication.

SECOND TABLE

MEASURES FULL OF MANSUETOUSNESS LEGITIMATELY EMPLOYED BY THE CHURCH TO ENLIGHTEN JEWISH TENEBRIES AND SAVE THEIR SOULS

1. The Good Friday Prayer

The Pope and the whole Church pray for them on Good Friday, that God may tear the veil, pass 'from the face of Moses over their eyes, and enlighten them. But we do not bend the knee when praying for them, because the Church wishes to testify to the horror she retains of what their ancestors did on a similar day, bending the knee before Jesus Christ to mock Him (Missale Rom., fer. VI, in Parasceve.).

2. Preaching

These were of two kinds: optional and compulsory.

A. Optional preaching. - For example, those of Saint Vincent Ferrier. "It was 1407: the aforementioned saint came to the first metropolis of Spain, Toledo, and in a single day obtained the conversion of 4,000 Jews. Their main synagogue was then transformed into a Church, and Jewry, which had been perhaps the most important in all the Spanish kingdoms, was reduced to a small number of unbelievers... The total number of converts in the kingdoms of Aragon, Valencia, Mallorca, Seville and Barcelona, according to Rabbi Isahak Cardoso, exceeds 15,000. In the provinces of Castile, the result of preaching was no less fortunate, perhaps reaching an equal figure. The appearance of Saint Vincent Ferrier before the Jewish people was a truly prodigious event." (Breviary of Valencia, edict, 1555. - *Les Juifs d'Espagne*, by Magnabal, p. 89-90. - *Vie de saint Vincent Ferrier*, by Father Ranzax, in *Acta sanctorum*, April 5).

B. Imposed preaching. - For example, those made to them in Rome, as a complement to the hospitality granted by the popes. "In 1584, Gregory XIII ordered that a sermon be given every week to instruct them. A skilful man was to be chosen to prove that the Messiah had come, that Jesus Christ was the Messiah who had abolished the Law, and to dwell on the long misery this nation had suffered for seventeen hundred years. He obliged a third of Rome's Jews to attend his preaching in turn. "(BasNage, l. IX, 2^e part, chap. xxxn. - *Becgnot, les Juifs d'Occident*, p. 174).

3. Public controversies

For example:

A. The famous Congress of Tortosa in Spain (1415). These were public conferences where a learned rabbi convert, Jerome de Sainte-Foi, assisted by several Christian theologians, disputed with fourteen Jewish rabbis about the coming of the Messiah. Sixty-nine sessions were held under the chairmanship of Antipope Benedict XIII, and were attended by Saint Vincent Ferrier and a host of prelates. There was an assault of erudition on all sides. All but two of the rabbis recognized Christian truth and were baptized. Several thousand of their co-religionists followed their example.¹ (Rodrig. de Castro, *Biblioth. espan.*, art. *Jehosua Halorqui*, p. 205-227. - Magnabal, *les*

Juifs d'Espagne, p. 90-105).

B. The reading and explanation of the Summa of Saint Thomas Aquinas converted Salomon, son of Lèvi, who took the name of Paul de Burgos. After his wife's death, he embraced the ecclesiastical state. His talents and great erudition, as well as his zeal for the propagation of the true religion, led to his appointment to important positions. He was tutor to John II, King of Castile, then archdeacon of Trevigno, bishop of Cartagena, and finally bishop of Burgos. He is said to have died Patriarch of Aquileia in 1455, at the age of eighty-two, having published a large number of writings in favor of religion.

Paul de Burgos' three sons, baptized with him, were equally commendable for their merit. The first, Alphonse, became bishop of Burgos, a see his father had already occupied. The second, Gonzalve, was bishop of Placentia. The third, Alvarès, who remained a layman, published a learned and beautiful history of John II, King of Castile and a pupil of his father (Rodiug. de Castro, *Biblioth. espan.*, art. Selomoh Halevi. - Paulus de Sancta Maria, *Scrutinium Scripturarum*, incunabulum, written by Paul de Burgos himself).

4. The study of Hebrew encouraged

by popes in Christian academies as a means of better evangelizing Jews

A. "The holy and zealous vicars of the Good Divine Shepherd have always recommended that missionaries charged with evangelizing the Jews study Hebrew, seeing knowledge of this language as one of the best means of bringing Israel, the prodigal son, back to his father's true home....

"The famous grammarian Rabbi Elie Hallévi, or Levita, was welcomed with distinction and lavishly maintained in the capital of the Christian world. The eminent princes of the Church made themselves his disciples in the Hebrew language, among whom Cardinal Cilles distinguished himself by his progress in Hebrew, and by his generosity towards the Jewish grammarian, whom he kept, with his family, for ten years in his palace." Drach, *Harmonies entre l'Église et la Synagogue*, t. I, p. 209-15).

Clement V ordered that there should be teachers in all the acade-

mies to learn Hebrew, and to make students who could argue against the Jews and instruct them, after having learned their language, their rites and the method necessary to convince them (Basnage, t. LX, 2nd part, chap. xix).

5. Establishing a catechumenate

Saint Ignatius began the catechumenate as it is still practiced in Rome. The Popes have shown the greatest solicitude in this area.

“Under Paul IV, a house was established where all converts were fed and housed. Basnage, t. IX, 2nd part, chap. xxxii

6. Respect for their Mosaic books, but condemnation and destruction of copies of the Talmud

1. Respect for the Mosaic books.

A. When Pope Innocent II came to Paris, crowds of people flocked to his footsteps; not even the Jewish community waited for him, presenting him with the books of the Law covered with a veil, as was customary; this prompted the Pope to say, addressing them: “May God remove from your hearts the veil that covers them.” (D. Bouquet, *liée, des hist. de France*, t. XII, p. 58. –Bédarride, *Hist. des juifs*, p. 129).

Here is one of the ceremonies of the installation of the Popes. “The Jews of Rome are obliged to wait for them on their way to Saint-Jean de Latran, and to present them with a copy of the Law. The Pope replies: “I venerate the Law you received from God through Moses: but I condemn the explanation you give to it, because you are waiting for the Messiah whom the Apostolic Church believes to be Jesus Christ, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with His Father and the Holy Spirit.” (Caxcellieri, *Storia de’ solemnî possessi*, Rome, 1802, in-4°, p. 225, note. – Depping, p. 155. –Basnage, t. LX, 1re partie, chap. xii.).

2. Condemnation and destruction of copies of the Talmud.

The Popes, and at their request Christian kings, often burned copies of the Talmud seized from synagogues or Israelites’ homes. Wasn’t this measure in contradiction with what we praised above, the Popes’ perfect respect for the exercise of Israelite worship?

At first glance, one is tempted to answer yes; but one quickly gives one's approval to the pontifical measure, if one reflects that the destruction of the Talmud was in the interest of true Judaism itself, i.e. of Mosaicism: the Popes removed the Talmud to procure for the Israelites the recovery of Mosaicism, as one washes away coarse paintings added to a canvas, to recover the masterpiece of a master, or as one removes slag to recover the fires of a precious stone.

What does the Talmud contain in its twelve folio volumes, and what role has it played in Jewish communities?

Full of scientific, ceremonial and casuistical questions, but empty or almost empty of dogmatic and above all Messianic questions, this fatal book was so vaunted by the Spirit of Lies that it had only one purpose: to divert the attention of poor Jews from studying the vital questions of the Bible in relation to the Messiah. A dark but clever diversion, the Talmud in a nutshell is nothing else. So it's hardly surprising that, alongside Catholics, Protestants and Israelites themselves have made the following judgments:

A. A Catholic judgement on the Talmud: "Instead of explaining the meaning of the prophecies to you," said a Father of the Church to the Israelites of his time, "your teachers stoop to nonsense: they are very concerned to know why male camels are mentioned in such and such a place, why such and such a quantity of flour or oil is included in your oblations. They investigate with religious care why an alpha was added to Abraham's primitive name, and a ran to Sarah's cehn. This is the object of their investigations. As for the things that are important and truly worthy of study, they dare not speak to you about them, they do not undertake to explain them; they forbid you to listen to us when we interpret them, b (Dialogue of Saint Justin with Tryphon.)

B. Protestant judgment: "The young rabbis brought up in such a school (of interminable and ridiculous subtleties) received the indelible imprint of it. From this merciless rolling mill their minds emerged flattened, but hardened, with a peculiar turn that no longer allowed them to think and feel like other men." (Albert Béville, *Le Peuple juif et le Judaïsme au temps de la formation du Talmud.*)

G. Israelite judgment: "It is to the Talmudists that, in their exile,

the Jews owe the suffocation of any spirit of spiritual independence, of any philosophical reason.... Ever since the Talmud, that leaden book, has weighed down Israel, the Jews have had no history.” (Alexandre Weil, *Moses and the Talmud*, p. 338.)

Conclusion:

By seizing and destroying copies of the Talmud, the Popes not only did no harm to the beautiful religion of Moses, they did it a favor.

Do not these two pictures, taken together, prove eloquently that the Catholic Church is both the highest school of respect for freedom of conscience, and the most anxious mother for the salvation of souls?

II

SECOND GOOD PROCEDURE: ADMIRABLE PROTECTION WITH WHICH THE POPES SURROUNDED THEM WHENEVER THEY WERE MASSACRED. IMPOSING AND IRREFUTABLE TESTIMONIES, DRAWN SOLELY FROM JEWISH, PROTESTANT OR ANTI-CHURCH AUTHORS. THE SAME ENERGY THAT THE POPES PUT INTO DEFENDING CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE, THEY ALSO PUT INTO DEFENDING JEWISH LIFE.

A second process full of compassionate charity has been the admirable protection with which the Sovereign Pontiffs have always surrounded them, whenever they were massacred.

Oh, how frequent, and in every country, have been the wraths of kings and peoples against the Jews! The intervention of the Sovereign Pontiffs and Bishops has been constant in every country, and the Church has not failed in its rainbow mission. In moments of anger, she protected the unfortunate; she openly took them under her protection, even anathematizing their executioners, who were Christians and her own children, but whose excesses she condemned. There is a book which it is impossible to read without shedding tears, especially if you are an Israelite; its title is: *The Valley of Weeping*.¹ All the sufferings of the dispersed people of Israel are collected and detailed in it; it seems as if we hear the sound of the drops of blood invoked at the foot of Golgotha, that its blood should fall on us and on our children! Bitter complaints rise from the pages of this book, against the Christian religion. But these complaints are misdirected. The religion of Christ has never committed such horrors. It has condemned the Christians who committed them, and with pity and tenderness has helped the Israelites who were their victims.

Testimonies to the Church's merciful conduct abound. The Church is holy because, condemning murder as much as defilement, she also saved the Israelites. The Popes were Israel's saviors.

In order to justify the holy and charitable Church, and at the same time accurately inform the Israelites, we have gathered unde-

niable testimonies. They carry all the more weight in that they have been gathered only from Protestant or Israelite authors, or from those hostile to the Church.

FIRST TESTIMONY

ON THE DISMAL EPISODE OF THE JEWS BURNED IN STRASBOURG IN THEIR OWN CEMETERY

(See above, 1st book, chap. vi.)

“The people dragged them to their own cemetery, and burned them there... In the midst of this carnage, the Pope was the first to speak out against popular insurrection. A number of German sovereigns also spoke out. The Emperor wrote to the magistrates of Strasbourg to complain about the cruel conduct of that city.” (Depping, author hostile to the Church, *Les Juifs dans le moyen âge*, p. 270-272.)

SECOND TESTIMONY

ABOUT A PLANNED MASSACRE OF JEWS IN SPAIN BY FERDINAND, KING OF CASTILE

“This prince, having declared war on the Saracens, believed he had to begin operations by massacring the Jews: the people and the army were entirely of this opinion, but the bishops had the courage to oppose it: they succeeded. (BeuGNot, hostile author, *les Juifs d’Occident*, part 1, p. 200.)

THIRD TESTIMONY

ABOUT THE CRUSADERS’ FURY AGAINST THE JEWS

1 “The Crusades, which in the other states of Europe were the signal for the massacre of the Jews, did not have such disastrous results in Italy. This wise pontiff made his voice heard in France and Spain, pleading the cause of the oppressed Jews with all the unction of a wise man and all the authority of a head of the Church”. (BeUGNot, Part 1, p. 152.)

2. “Gregory IX, having learned that circumcised people were being massacred in various places as they prepared for their journey to the Holy Land, prevented these barbaric executions.” (Basxage, Protestant author, *Ilist. des juifs*, t. IX, 2nd part, chap. xix.)

3. “In Rouen, the people who were to go on crusade once said

among themselves: "We are going to make an immense journey to fight in the East against the enemies of God, while we have before our eyes the greatest enemies God has ever had. They concluded that the Jews had to be massacred before setting off for the Holy Land, and this false reasoning was the cause of the appalling massacres that once again bloodied the soil of France. This cold cruelty still breathes in the accounts of medieval historians. One of them recounts, with a coolness that makes one shudder, that the crusaders, before setting out on their journey, attacked the Jews, forced them to believe in Jesus Christ, slit the throats of those who refused to do so, and sent them to hell; which, in an old French translation, is rendered as follows: "Et cel qui ne vouldront croire furent occis et commandez as déables. "The excommunications launched by the priests were unable to prevent these horrors... At this time, Pope Alexander wrote to the viscount and bishop of Narbonne, praising one for preventing the massacre of the region's Jews, and reminding the other that God does not delight in the shedding of blood. It is remarkable that it is in the history of the Jews that several Popes show themselves in the most Christian light." (Depping, pp. 125-127.)

4. "At Speyer, they defended themselves courageously, and were able to interest Vévêque in their protection, who had some guilty Christians put to death." {Ibid., p. 128.)

5. "It was a monk, Radulphe, who, preaching the crusade in the Rhine countries, aroused the people, or rather the rabble, against the Jews. They fled from Cologne, Mainz, Worms, Speyer and Strasbourg to the cities of the King of Germania, where such horrors were not tolerated. To put an end to the cruelties of the Christians, St. Bernard had to urge the bishops of Franconia and Bavaria to oppose these bloody executions, and he had to travel to Germany to urge the fanatic Radulphe to put the sword back in its sheath, return to his convent, and stop stirring up the rabble". {Ibid., p. 129.)

6. "Catholic clergy above all, following the example of the Sovereign Pontiffs, have always behaved with benevolent tolerance towards Israelites. During the thickest darkness and fury of the Middle Ages, they declared themselves the protectors of persecuted Jews. Saint Bernard, after preaching the crusade, preached against the crusad-

ers who began their campaign with violence against the enemies of the cross in Europe. Not content with writing the pathetic letters in favor of the Jews that are still to be found in his Works, he ran to Germany to protect them more effectively by means of the ascendancy he exerted through his reputation, his knowledge and his brilliant virtues.” (Rabbi Drach, *Harmonie entre l’Église et la Synagogue*, t. I, p. 255–256.)

FOURTH TESTIMONY

ABOUT THE APPEARANCE OF THE SHEPHERDS AND THEIR FRENZY AGAINST THE JEWS

1 “Clement V was their protector against the violence of the shepherds, whom he excommunicated. But the Church’s wrath made little impression on mutineers; and the Jews had the honor of counting a Pope among their defenders, without reaping any fruit from his protection.” (Basnage, t. IX, 2nd part, chap. xix.)

2. The appearance of the *pastoureux* was a singular assemblage of shepherds and peasants, who, with a few fanatics at their head, spread like a torrent across France. The Jews became the victims of the exaltation of these crude men... Massacres were horrendous throughout Gascony; barely a few unfortunate Jews were able to escape to Spain, where the same rage soon erupted. In vain the Pope, to protect the Jews, pronounced anathema against the shepherds; his wrath was scorned.” (Depping, p.259.)

3. << If a Jewish historian is to be believed, one hundred and twenty Jewish communities were completely destroyed in the south of France. In Gascony, at Castel-Sarrasin, Bordeaux, Agen, Foix, the Jews were mercilessly massacred; a large number of them had taken refuge in a fortified castle on the Garonne. They withstood a siege, but were soon forced to yield to the numbers of the attackers, and would rather kill each other than fall alive into the hands of their persecutors. However, the Pope did everything in his power to prevent these disorders, and pronounced an excommunication”. (Bédaiuude, *Israelite author, Hist. des juifs en France, en Italie et en Espagne*, p. 264–5.)

FIFTH TESTIMONY

ABOUT THE ACCUSATION of poisoning fountains and rivers
AND THE HORRIBLE MASSACRES OF JEWS THAT FOL-
LOWED

1 "Clement VI gave them a resounding helping hand. The persecution they suffered was often like a fire ignited at the end of a kingdom, igniting not only the provinces, but also neighboring states, and always burning with terrible violence. The pretext for this one, which was almost universal, was the poison they had thrown into the fountains and rivers, to kill anyone who drank it. Those who examine the matter in cold blood recognize that it is impossible to poison rivers in this way. But it doesn't matter. Many people died that year, and the Jews had to be guilty of this mortality. They were massacred in Spain, and in Germany, where the evil had begun. Twelve thousand perished in Bavaria. The imperial cities built bridges and towers out of the ruins of the houses they had knocked down, the number of which must therefore have been considerable. Some, reduced to despair, allowed themselves to be crushed under the houses they had knocked down, while others burned themselves to death in order to avoid falling into the hands of these merciless Christians. Clement VI, in the midst of all their persecutors, was their father and their comforter. He did everything in his power to halt the course of such fury. Historians and writers of the time accused him of having saved the remnants of this nation through avarice rather than charity; but he in turn accused the persecutors of acting so violently only to enrich themselves by plundering the property of others; and perhaps everyone was right." (Basnage, Protestant author, t. IX, 2nd part, chap. xix.)

2. "It was worthy of the Holy See to speak out against such horrors. The Pope understood his mission; he published a bull in which he endeavored to prove that the Jews had been victims of the plague like the Christians; but what could reasoning do to a vulgar people blinded by fanaticism?" (Bédarride, Israélite author, p. 268.)

3. "In almost every country, the people accused the Jews of having poisoned rivers and fountains, and even of having poisoned the air through conjurations and magical operations. Soon, the most

extraordinary accusations were being made. In vain, the Jews summoned the most skilful physicians to prove that the waters were not poisoned, and that the evil was the plague: a people in fury cannot reason. The rulers, and even some prelates, would have liked to save the persecuted unfortunates; but they recognized the danger of opposing the violent eruptions of despair of an exasperated people. The Jews' throats were slit.

"The Pope was the first, in the midst of this carnage, to speak out against the popular insurrections, and to seek to enlighten the bewildered multitude about the alleged conspiracy of the Jews against Christendom: he showed that the Jews had been victims of the plague like the Christians; he enjoined the archbishops, bishops and all the ecclesiastical authorities to contain the furious people and to punish those who disobeyed with the penalties of the Church". (Depping, pp. 265-264, 271.)

SIXTH TESTIMONY

About massacres of Jews in Brabant
and on the banks of the rhine

1 "In Brabant, a frenzied mob laid siege to Genappe, where, in 1508, Duke Jean II had allowed the Israelites to live. This prince was firm enough to defend his work. He vigorously repelled the fanatics, many of whom perished under the sword of his men-at-arms. The others went to accuse him of colluding with the Jews at the ope in Avignon; but the pontifical court approved the rigor oh rather the justice of the Duke of Brabant." (Deppi.ng, p. 261.)

2" "We were recovering from the disorder that the pastoureaux had thrown into society, when in 1437 a fanatical German named Armleder, a village innkeeper, stirred up the people on the banks of the Rhine against the Jews. The rabble immolated any unfortunates they could seize in their blind fury. In Trier, however, the archbishop and the burghers vied with each other to protect the Jews against the madmen who were slaughtering and pillaging in the Jewish quarter. The archbishop asserted his jurisdiction and restored what had been taken from the persecuted. Such acts of courage, or, if you like, of justice, are rare enough for history to record them with praise in the

splendors of the Middle Ages.” (Depping, pp. 261–262.)

In the course of these testimonies, we deem an interruption necessary and well-placed at this point, both to admire the magnanimity of the Roman Pontiffs and the Catholic clergy, and to answer an objection that must surely have occurred to the reader.

First, admiration.

These Popes and bishops who invariably rise up, one after the other, centuries apart and in every corner of Catholic territory, to defend the lives of Jews in (langer, to condemn the slitting of throats and cutthroats, isn't that admirable? Isn't it a sign that where there is such constant, unchanging charity, there must also be truth? Is error thus faithful to kindness and gentleness? Is it not, on the contrary, implacable, rejoicing in the disappearance of its adversaries? An ungrateful pen has written: “That if the Popes had preserved the Jews, it was for a self-interested purpose, so that they could serve as living proof of the truth of Christianity. “1 Foolish wickedness that measures the hearts of Catholic Pontiffs against its own, but only succeeds in highlighting their ineffable charity! Anyone who wants to be sincere will bow to this charity and to our testimonies drawn from unsuspecting sources. In the history of the Church, there are two splendid testimonies to the magnanimity and energy of the Roman Pontiffs, both of which in some way parallel each other: their attitude when it came to defending the sacrament of marriage, and their attitude when it came to defending the lives of the Jews.

The poor wife, unjustly repudiated, and the poor Jew, unjustly threatened: two weaknesses they cover with their majesty and power, in times of barbarism. To whom, in fact, does the law of marriage, that palladium of society, owe the fact that it has not been distorted, perverted, torn to pieces amid the corruption and violence that prevailed everywhere, as much in the era of the Lower Empire and the invasion of the Barbarians as in that of the Iron Age? To the Roman Pontiffs. Catholic doctrine on marriage was: one with one cl forever. Neither promises nor threats could shake the Pope. The purple of the Caesars didn't frighten him any more than the terrible gaze of hairy kings. What would have happened,” says an eloquent apologist, “if these barbarian kings disguised under the splendeur of the

purple, if these proud lords fortified in their castles and surrounded by timid vassals, had not found a dam in the authority of the Church; if, at the first glance cast on a new beauty, at the first ardor that would have awakened in their hearts and inspired their disgust for their legitimate spouse, they had not encountered the ever-present memory of an inflexible authority! They could overwhelm a bishop with vexations, silence him by fear or promises, extort the votes of a particular council, make a party for themselves by threats or intrigue; but in the distance appeared to them the summit of the Vatican: this terrifying vision annihilated all their hopes. They felt that the most relentless struggle would never have given them victory. Their intrigues, their pleas, everything would have broken down against this answer: one with one and for ever. "1

Well, the shadow of the Vatican has been cast, no less protective, over the lives of the Jews. The same fearlessness on the part of the Roman Pontiffs, the same indignation, the same indomitable energy, when they learned that massacres were beginning. The plague breaks out: "The Jews are the poisoners," cries a frenzied people, and Jews are immolated by the thousands. But one voice dominated the storm: the voice of the Supreme Pontiff. "Clement VI cries out: "All Christians are forbidden to impute to the Jews crimes of which they are not guilty; forbidden to attack their lives; forbidden to attack their property; forbidden to use any violence against them without the order and sentence of legitimate judges. The fury of the populace, calmed for a moment, reignited with the scourge; but Clement, a second time, stood up: "No! The guilty are not the Jews; nothing proves their crime, but your murders are detestable. If you catch them at fault, let your courts render justice; if not, let every bishop stand up, and in the name of the Holy See hurl the thunderbolts of excommunication against anyone who dares trouble a Jew."

O European peoples, you owe eternal gratitude to the Roman Pontiffs for having preserved for you, in times of barbarism, the sanctity of marriage; and law, O people of Israel, you owe them for having preserved the lives of your children!

But here's the objection.

III

RESPONSE TO THIS OBJECTION: THAT IT WAS CHRISTIANS,
AND EVEN CRUSADERS, WHO MASSACRED JEWS IN THIS WAY.

“Those who massacred the Jews were Christians, and even Crusaders. If the Popes interfered, it is no less certain that it was their followers, the disciples of Christianity, who, holding the cross in one hand, with the other plunged the iron into the bosom of defenseless wretches, slitting the throats of women, old men and children alike...”.

Such is the objection, repeated in one form or another by all Jewish historians, and with such eloquence! It's understandable.

Then, turning from the particular to the general, they add:

“Is it not fair, then, to conclude that the Christian religion proved bloody, terrible for the Israelites, and that it is quite wrong to praise so much the evangelical gentleness?”

We answer:

The Popes were alone, as sovereign Pontiffs, the true representatives of the Christian religion, its expression and organ, and not this or that furious monk who incited to massacre, and whom pontifical excommunication knew how to reach and punish. Consequently, the Christian religion must be judged solely by the indignant and generous conduct of the pontiffs who flew to the rescue, and not by the bloody hands of unworthy crusaders.

It was possible to prevent further bloodshed, to prevent the religion of Christ from being distorted, and the Popes did just that. But they were unable to prevent two things, and the reader, after meditating on them, will find the opportunity, by understanding them, to admire even more both the merciful intervention of the pontiffs and the innocence of the Christian religion in the midst of these bloody disorders.

1. -The first thing the Popes could not prevent was the appearance and irruption of human passions among the peoples of Europe, even though they had become Christians. Passions are the sad lot of our vitiated human nature,⁴ its tireless and frightening product: frightening, because where we think we have to deal only with virtue,

we suddenly find ourselves faced with the passion that disfigures and compromises the work of virtue. Religion, which is divine, gives us sublime ideas, and human nature, which is vitiated, causes passions to mingle with these ideas. Hence, in the holiest of undertakings, the gigantic battle that has existed for centuries between beautiful ideas and the passions that often disrupt and darken the noble undertakings inspired by those ideas. It's like a beautiful soul struggling not to be united with a deformed body, with which it ends up accomplishing masterpieces by making use of it. This antagonism of ideas and passions is humanity's torment, but also its merit. In this antagonism, popes bless ideas and the enterprises they give rise to, but condemn passions.

The Crusades are a highly instructive example of this struggle between ideas and passions, and of the conduct of the Popes in this struggle.

Indeed, from a religious point of view as well as from a political and social one, the Crusades were the largest undertaking of the Christian nations of Europe: a great act of faith and a masterpiece of politics. Whether or not we venerate the Holy Sepulchre, we are obliged to acknowledge this result; the philosophy of history has passed irrevocable judgment on this cause.¹

The Jews, however, say: "The Crusades were a continual source of misfortune for us: the Crusaders tried to slaughter the infidels on our behalf "2.

How can we reconcile these two opposing views?

The difference we have established between ideas and passions makes this reconciliation possible; it allows us to respect and admire the great Christian enterprise, and yet not find fault with the bitter tears of the poor Jews, or even their bitter criticisms.

The Crusades were indeed a great and holy idea. The massacres committed during the Crusades were the result of passions, those sad passions that always form a fatal procession to the noblest ideas.

The Popes blessed the Crusades, favored the great idea, the holy enterprise, and stigmatized the passions, condemning the cutthroats.

Is this not the way to judge? Is this not the way to separate the wheat from the chaff? This separation in history is very important, if

you want to see clearly and be impartial, if you want to give back to religion what belongs to religion, and to passions what belongs to passions. It is obvious that the Popes could not prevent the appearance and interference of passions; but they could fight them, pursue them, circumscribe them, attenuate their effect, anathematize them: they did not fail to do so, and the Israelites themselves, recognizing this, blessed them.

II. - A second thing the Popes could not prevent was that men of either the xiii or xiii century were not of their century. They could not ensure that the mores and civilization of the eighteenth century would prevail in the eighteenth century.

This remark is as important as the previous one. Most of the time, we judge the people and things of a past era with the eyes and mind of the era to which we belong. Necessarily, we judge badly. Those we judge are dead people who, in their time, didn't live like us, didn't have our habits, our customs, our progress. We lend them our own; on the contrary, to judge them, we should draw inspiration from theirs. It is therefore important, if we want our judgment to be sound and impartial, to abandon our own environment, to abstract ourselves from it, in order to reconstruct, by means of conscientious research and accurate information, the environment of the period we wish to judge. Then, we judge well.

Let's try it for the objection we're about to resolve.

What was the historical environment of the periods in which all these massacres of Jews took place? What were the feelings and habits of those times? What was the state of civilization and softening of morals? What kind of people were we dealing with?

All historians agree that the peoples of that time were semi-barbaric, that is, in a social state that was neither civilization nor barbarism, but a mixture of both. It's the flowering of morals, as we've already shown; it was flowering, but amidst what difficulties and anguish!

In those days, people were semi-barbarians. Because the Catholic Church, having found them barbaric, completely barbaric, when they were called Germans, Germans, Franks, Visigoths, Lombards, is working on them, bringing them up, teaching them to tame themselves, civilizing them: but their education is far from complete. The

Christian nations of the xi and xii centuries are in the age of fiery youth: noble children by virtue of their baptism and their living faith, but with all the instincts of children of the North who have emerged from the forests. So many painful moments in the midst of their progress! What protrusions of their old nature! What returns to barbarism that the Church immediately represses! How many acts of ferocity! Certainly, far from being responsible, the Church is admirable for not allowing itself to be discouraged. We would even add a thought that will not be without value for Israelite readers:

These nations that the Church thus seeks to shape and civilize are the very nations that you, Israel, when you were God's people in Palestine, despised as barbarians, as foreigners, as unworthy of you, with whom it was forbidden, by the Law, to have relations: in a word, the uncircumcised. Well, it's these foreigners, these uncircumcised, these barbarians that the Catholic Church has valiantly set about planing, shaping and civilizing. Is it any wonder, then, that the Church is finding it difficult, very difficult, to educate them? I insist on this point, it's important. What do you mean? Israel, when you were in Palestine, you could do nothing for the nations; you were even forbidden to undertake anything, the work being beyond your strength: and when the Church's mission of great labor comes, when she puts her genius, her sweat and her devotion into it, when she is in the process of obtaining prodigies of transformation, you will make yourself a weapon against her with scenes of savagery that she represses, and you will find it astonishing that there are in her bosom uncircumcised people of heart, when you yourself have never been able to do anything about them or for them! Is that right? Ah, it's not reproaches, it's admiration that this valiant Church deserves: admirable for having approached the nations, innocent of their faults and radiant with their transformation!

Such is the historical milieu, true, perfectly true, of the xth, xic, xiiie, xiiie and xive centuries. One author has defined these times with a formula that is as accurate as it is concise: barbarism tempered by religion, religion disfigured by barbarism.¹

Does this not explain, without the slightest surprise, why massacres of Jews took place in those times? Would it not be ignorance

or bad faith to accuse the Church of this? Didn't it do all it could to condemn them, stop them, circumscribe them and prevent their return? Could she, short of a true miracle, prevent the mores of the xiie and xiii centuries from being other than the mores of the xii and xiii centuries?

The author of the formula quoted above makes a very judicious historical distinction, to which we'd like to add one line. He says:

"Study the wars of the xiii century. You will hear the most holy maxims proclaiming legitimacy. Law, reason and justice are incessantly invoked; God's court is constantly called upon: this is the Christian influence. But, at the same time, your eyes are distressed by the spectacle of countless acts of violence, cruelty, pillage, kidnapping, murder and arson: this is barbarism.

"Take a look at the Crusades. You'll notice that truly great ideas, vast plans and beautiful inspirations are fermenting in people's heads, that all hearts are overflowing with generous feelings, that a holy enthusiasm, transporting all souls, makes them capable of the most heroic actions: that's Christian influence. But look at the execution. You will see disorder, improvidence, lack of discipline in the army; you will look in vain for concert and harmony between those taking part in the gigantic undertaking: that is barbarism.

"Italian, German, English, Spanish and French are mingled around the pulpits of Abeilard, Albert the Great and Saint Thomas Aquinas; the search for truth enthalls this youth; the ardor of knowledge consumes it; the longest journeys cannot stop it; the enthusiasm for illustrious masters is indescribable: this is Christian influence. But look at this same youth that inspires such consoling hopes, isn't it also this licentious, restless mob, constantly brawling in the streets and forming an indocile democracy in the heart of large cities, where order and law can only be maintained with great difficulty: that's barbarism. "1

Well, to this perfectly accurate historical discernment, we would add:

Jews accused of poisoning rivers and, on this accusation, massacred by the thousands; shepherds or even flagellants who go on pilgrimage half-naked, laden with instruments of penance and who,

on their way, slit the throats of Jews; huge pits and pyres where, on justified or false suspicions, entire Jewish families were thrown on the ground, without distinction of sex or age, as in Chinon, Orleans, Speyer, Mainz, Strasbourg; the crusade inaugurated by long trails of their blood : .

This is barbarism, atrocious and detestable barbarism.

But :

The Popes rising up to reprove with horror all these excesses, rising up not once, not ten times, but always, and all the Bishops with them, all stretching out their arms to the victims who are Jews, and hurling their thunderbolts against the executioners who are Christians :

This is the Christian influence, the divine Christian influence which, in charity, makes no distinction between anyone.

We dare to challenge the most hostile critics to dispute that this discernment is not the truth!

Israelites, my brothers, let us bow before the Roman Pontiffs: they have often saved the remnants of Israel.

Do we want to understand, all at once, all the beauty of this intervention of mercy and salvation? Compare these two Romans: Titus and a Pope.

It was from Rome, belonging to the Caesars, that the legions of Titus emerged, destroying Jerusalem from top to bottom - we know how harshly! and slaughtering fifteen hundred thousand Jews. Titus had them crucified by the thousands. According to the historian Josephus, not enough wood could be procured to crucify them all.

On the contrary, from Rome, which belonged to the Popes, came all the protests of justice, all the cries of mercy, all the tireless representations, when, in moments of anger of kings and peoples, the massacres began again against our brothers.

What an eloquent contrast between these two Romes, that of Titus and that of the Popes! The she-wolf was mistress of the one, while the Lamb reigned in the other!

IV

THIRD GOOD PROCEDURE: NOT ONLY DID THE POPES INTERCEDE TO SAVE THEIR OWN LIVES, BUT THEY ALWAYS KINDLY TOOK IN FUGITIVES. ROME AND AVIGNON, CITIES OF REFUGE FOR JEWS WHEN THEY ARE UNHAPPY ELSEWHERE.

After these words of gratitude, let us return to the tone of the historian.

Here are other extremely precious testimonies, not only on the preservation of life that the Jews owe to the Popes, but on the peaceful existence they always led with them in the shadow of their tiara. Like the preceding testimonies, they are taken from non-Catholic authors.

SEVENTH TESTIMONY ABOUT THE REFUGE

THE JEWS FOUND REFUGE IN AVIGNON WITH THE POPES, WHEN THEY WERE UNHAPPY OR PERSECUTED ELSEWHERE

1 “The beginnings of the fourteenth century were marked by the transfer of the Holy See to Avignon: an event which seemed destined to have an influence only on the affairs of Christendom, and which, however, was not without results with regard to the Jews. As soon as it was decided to establish the pontiffs in Avignon, a swarm of Jews flocked there from Spain, France and Germany, drawn by trade and the hope of rest. Clement V welcomed them with open arms”. (Beu- gxot, hostile author, *lra partie*, p. 158.)

2. “The transfer of the Holy See to Avignon was of great benefit to the Jews of other kingdoms. Avignon became a refuge for Jews persecuted throughout Europe”. (Halévy, author *Israélite*, *Hist des juifs*, p. 59.)

3. “Clement VI received them in Avignon, while they were being burned elsewhere.” (Basnage, Protestant author, t. IX, 2nd part, chap. xix.)

EIGHTH TESTIMONY

ABOUT THEIR EXPULSION
FROM SPAIN BY FERDINAND AND ISABELLE
AND THE TOUCHING WELCOME THEY FOUND IN
ROME FROM
THE POPE

1 “Alexander VI, instead of mistreating them, received them with great charity. Driven out of Spain by Ferdinand the Catholic, and fugitives everywhere, they didn’t know where to rest the soles of their feet. Those who landed in Rome were poorly received by their harsh and barbaric brethren, who would have left them to perish of hunger had not Alexander VI rescued them.

“Indeed, this Pope, although a Spaniard by birth, and head of the Church, having learned that the Jews, who had long been established in Rome, were leaving the exiles in misery without wishing to help them, he threatened to expel them, if they did not change their conduct, and if they did not give their unfortunate brothers the means to establish themselves in the Roman State, b Basnage, t. IX, 2nd part, chap. xxxi.)

2. “The Pope received humanely in Rome those whom Ferdinand the Catholic was inhumanely driving out of his kingdoms.” (Ibid., chap. xix.)

3. “Alexander VI, who then occupied the Holy See, rightly thought that the influx of Jews into his States could only make them flourish: so he not only received them, but even gave them signal signs of protection.” (Bédarride, Israelite author, *les Juifs en France, en Italie et en Espagne*, p. 507.)

4. “The exile from Spain brought a large number of Jews to Naples. The Viceroy of Naples informed the Emperor, who ordered their expulsion. They did not leave Italy, and most of them went to Home”. (Halévy, Israelite author, *Hist. des juifs*, p. 46.)

NINTH TESTIMONY
ABOUT THE PROTECTION AND TRANQUILITY
THEY HAVE ALWAYS ENJOYED IN THE STATES OF THE
CHURCH

1.. “In spite of the momentary exiles they suffered in certain

Italian states, they always managed to re-establish themselves, and the Holy See always offered them refuge". (Bédarride, auteur Israélite, p. 565.)

2. "Why do the Popes favor the Jews over the Reformed? Answer: the Popes have less grief and violence against the Jews, because they are older than they are and are not powerful enough to cast a shadow on them. The jealousy of princes only flares up against a nascent republic, or against an importunate neighbor who is expanding, or who wants to take over provinces. Weak nations that can do no harm are left to live more quietly. The Reformed attacked pontifical authority head-on, and were formidable neighbors; we were therefore constantly vigilant in weakening them. There is nothing in the condition of the Jews to arouse the jealousy of the Popes. Far from gaining by losing them, they are interested by the care of their revenues in keeping them." (Basnage, Protestant author, t. IX, 2^e partie, chap. xix.)

3. "The force of truth undoubtedly carries Basnage away when he praises the constant humanity of the Popes towards the Jews, who sometimes paid them with ingratitude." (Rabbi Dracii, Harmonie, t. I, p. 256.)

4. "The Popes needed large sums of money to fuel or incite wars, and to obtain them, they could turn to no one but the Jews; they alone possessed capital that was always available. This is how the court of Borne became accustomed to requesting and rendering services to a nation which, according to its principles, it should detest." (Beuxot, hostile author, *les Juifs d'Occident* 2. part., p. 88.)

5. "The Popes loved the Jews, as active, industrious, wealthy people, who could, through the direction of their work and the ardor of their zeal, make commerce flourish in Italy; but, considering the rabbis as scholars, i.e. as anti-Christian theologians and controversialists, they had to fear them." (Ibid., part 5, p. 190.)

It follows from these testimonies that the Popes not only showed themselves to be their saviors by rescuing them from the massacres, but also their protectors, their refuge, their providence, by opening their arms to them, welcoming them with kindness when they were being chased away. As the Pope was not yet recognized by them as

their shepherd, the Pope's city was, at least, their home! There was something touching in seeing the Papacy, itself exiled to Avignon, welcome and shelter the exiles from Jerusalem! The force of truth has forced all hostile, hateful and ungrateful historians to recognize this refuge. Unable to deny hospitality, they took revenge by trying to blacken it, by portraying it as self-serving; the Popes welcomed the Jews as they would welcome income! For us, we found in this refuge a touching analogy:

In the past, when the Israelites occupied Palestine, they had six cities of refuge. "God had commanded Moses to mark six cities of refuge or asylum, three on the Jordan and three on the other side, at equal distances, where those who had killed someone inadvertently and without any intention could withdraw and be safe from the resentment of the dead man's relatives "1.

Now here's the touching analogy:

After the death of the Righteous One on the cross, the descendants of those who made the Passion, often hunted down by Christians, have always found two cities of refuge: Rome and Avignon. It is to the Pope, who represented the Just One on earth, and to him alone, that the poor fugitives have always found justice and protection. We are therefore not surprised by two famous sayings of the Middle Ages: the peasant of the Rhine used to say of the bishop-electors: "It's good to live under the crook"; and on the banks of the Tiber, the proverbial phrase was repeated: "Rome is the paradise of the Jews".

In addition, here is a final testimony that magnificently crowns the previous nine: it comes from the Jews themselves, as official testimony. They made a point of giving it on the two most solemn occasions in their history since the ruin of Jerusalem: before the Constituent Assembly in 1789, when it came to their emancipation; and at the meeting of the Grand Sanhedrin in Paris in 1807. This testimony is not precisely where it belongs here. It should form part of a subsequent volume, since our account in this volume relates to the reign of Louis XVI or earlier. But we anticipate, in order to unbundle into a single picture all that concerns the kindnesses of the Roman Pontiffs and the Catholic clergy towards the Israelites.

TENTH TESTIMONY

A PROPOS 1>U THE BLOODY SUMMARY OF THEIR HISTORY UNFOLDED BEFORE THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF 1789 AND THE GRAND SANHEDRIN OF 1807

1. Official testimony from Grégoire, a constitutional priest, speaking on behalf of the Jews, scs clients, at the bar of the Assemblée:

“The papal stalls have always been their earthly paradise. Their Ghetto in Rome is still the same as it was in Juvenal’s time; and, as M. de Buffon observes, their families are the oldest in Rome. The enlightened zeal of Peter’s successors always protected the remnants of Israel. We still have epistles from Gregory IX to Saint Louis, censuring those who covered their avarice with the cloak of religion, in order to offend the Jews. I see Innocent IV writing to justify them, and complaining that they are more miserable under Christian princes than their fathers were under the Egyptian kings. While Europe was massacring them in the 14th century, Avignon became their asylum, and Clement VI, their comforter and father, forgot nothing to soften the lot of the persecuted and disarm the persecutors. An epistle from Alexander II, addressed to the Bishops of France, condemning the violence perpetrated against the Jews, is still read with transport. This monument will constantly honor the memory of the Roman Pontiff as well as that of the French Prelates, and certainly today’s clergy will rival the one that preceded it”. (Motion en faveur des juifs, by Grégoire, curé d’Emberménil, député de Nancy, p. 15-16.)

2.. Official testimony of the Assembly of Notables of Israel meeting as the Grand Sanhedrin, Paris, February 5, 1807.

“The deputies of the Empire of France and the Kingdom of Italy to the Hebrew Synod, decreed on May 50 last, penetrated with gratitude for the successive benefits of the Christian clergy, in past centuries, in favor of the Israelites of the various States of Europe ;

“Full of gratitude for the welcome which various Pontiffs and many other ecclesiastics have given at different times to the Israelites of various countries, when barbarism, prejudice and ignorance combined to persecute and expel the Jews from the bosom of society;

“Decide that the expression of these sentiments shall be record-

ed in the minutes of this day, so that it may remain forever as an authentic testimony of the gratitude of the Israelites of this assembly for the benefits which the generations that preceded them received from the ecclesiastics of the various countries of Europe;

“Decide, moreover, that a copy of these sentiments shall be sent to His Exc. the Minister of Worship.”

This decision was adopted following a remarkable speech by M. Avigdor, deputy to the Israelite assembly for the Alpes-Maritimes. This speech, which enumerates, century by century, the kindnesses of the Popes, ends as follows:

“The people of Israel, always unhappy and almost always oppressed, have never had the means or the opportunity to express their gratitude for so many benefits; a gratitude all the sweeter to bear witness to, as they owe it to disinterested and doubly respectable men.

“For eighteen centuries, the circumstance in which we find ourselves is the only one that has presented itself to make known the sentiments with which our hearts are penetrated.

“This great and happy circumstance is also the most appropriate, the most beautiful and the most glorious for expressing to ecclesiastics in particular our full gratitude to them and to their predecessors.

“Let us hasten therefore, Gentlemen, to take advantage of this memorable time, and pay them the just tribute of gratitude we owe them; let us echo in this chamber the expression of our gratitude; let us solemnly testify to them our sincere thanks for the successive benefits they have showered on the generations that preceded us.”

The minutes conclude as follows: “The assembly applauded Mr. Avigdor’s speech. (*Procès-verbal des séances de l’assemblée des députés français professant la religion juive*, p. 169 ff.)

Isn’t all this evidence conclusive?

Before concluding, we would like to express one regret: we have only been able to skim the surface of such beautiful material, by condensing it into synoptic tables. At the very least, let this weak and rapid sketch of the Popes’ kindnesses to the Israelites suggest to one of our readers (may he be an Israelite!) the thought of writing a complete book, with this title: *La Reconnaissance des dispersés d’Israël envers la papauté*.¹

O dear Catholic Church, how gentle and helpful you have been to the poor Jews! Thank you! You could not show yourself their mother - they did not yet accept you as such! -But at least you showed yourself to be their sister in charity.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH'S WISE MEASURES AND VIGILANT PRECAUTIONS TO KEEP JEWS AWAY FROM THE HEART OF CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

I

IN ADDITION TO PROCEDURES INSPIRED BY GENTLENESS AND CHARITY, THE CHURCH HAS DECREED RESTRICTIONS AND EMPLOYED PRECAUTIONS AGAINST THE JEWS, TO CIRCUMSCRIBE THEIR FREEDOM TO ARRIVE, AND THUS SAFEGUARD CHRISTIAN SOCIETY. EXCHANGE OF SERVICES WITH THEM, BUT A SEVERE LINE OF DEMARCATION TO KEEP THEM AWAY FROM THE HEART OF SOCIETY. THROUGHOUT THE MIDDLE AGES, A LIST OF SOCIAL PROFESSIONS PERMITTED TO JEWS, AND THOSE FORBIDDEN TO THEM.

The inspired prophets of Israel had announced the structure of the Church, the new Jerusalem, in these terms:

“Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls, because of the multitude of men and beasts that will be in her midst;

“And I,” says the Lord, “will be a wall of fire to her, and I will be in glory in her midst¹.”

And again:

“Your gates will be open continually; neither day nor night will they be closed, so that the strength of the nations may be brought to you, and their kings brought to you. “²

This new Jerusalem, an immense city without walls, open day and night, accessible to all at all times, has been admirably realized in the Catholic Church.

The Church has no walls. It uses earthly things - stone, brick, wood, marble, gold - but without depending on them: unlike the first Jerusalem, which depended on its Temple. The Church's constitution is, above all, spiritual.

This constitution was in harmony with the merciful views of its divine Architect. Established to become the salvation of souls and peoples, was the Church not to appear the open city par excellence? How could it have been accessible to all, if it had had walls, or if, at certain times, its doors had had to remain closed? Walls would have prevented many peoples, many souls, from seeking salvation there. Gates would have paralyzed the efforts of the timid, disconcerted the good will of repentant sinners and the return of the prodigal.

But this merciful and beautiful city, open and accessible from all sides, must be protected and guaranteed, as must the society of Christian nations that is being formed in its bosom, under its auspices.

How will this protection be exercised, given that there are neither gates nor ramparts?

By ordinances and regulations?

The Christian Pontiffs and Kings agree to make these ordinances.

There will be some against the infidels; there will be some against the Jews.

Those concerning the Jews enact precautions and restrictions, to limit and stop their freedom to ascend and reach.

Access to the heart of Christian society is carefully closed to them. The great rule of prudence adopted with regard to them is this: "Any office which binds to the very constitution of Christian society cannot be entrusted to them". (See chapter I of this second book, § 5).

The Jews understand this and keep themselves apart in their Jewish communities.

Observance of this rule of prudence is the joint responsibility of the Church and the State. There is an agreement between the temporal power and the spiritual power to enforce it. The regulations issued by the Councils against the Jews, from the vi to the xvi century, were at the same time civil laws enshrining their exclusion. The Church and the State together ensured that there would be no surreptitious invasion of society by the Jews, and that Christian beliefs and morals would be respected by them.

There is, however, an exchange of services between Christians and Jews.

In this exchange, the state was not always circumspect or religious. There are princes and lords who, under specious pretexts, out of politics, a need for money, or even greed, grant Jews more latitude than is appropriate, thereby compromising society. The Church intervenes, alarmed. Its Councils put a stop to the evil and put everything in its place. Weakness and treachery were severely reprimanded, and new ordinances, which acted as locks on the gates, more vigorously excluded any daring Jews who might have thought of entering and climbing.

This severe and attentive intervention by the Church produced a remarkable phenomenon. The same Pontiffs and Councils that protected Jewish lives from the wrath of Christian peoples also protected Christian society from the perils that Jews could, and sometimes did, bring. In this, an impartiality shines forth that is unequalled anywhere: a clear mark of a superior mission. Because she is the repository of evangelical gentleness, the Church defends Jewish life. Because she is the mother of the Christian nations, she preserves them from the Hebrew invasion that would be their death.

These alternations of precautions, imprudence and remedial aid fill the entire Middle Ages.

The following table will help us to understand these two things: the good exchange of services between Christians and Jews under the Church's tutelage, and the severe precautions taken by this very prudent mother to prevent the nations from being invaded by the Jewish element and thus losing the leadership of society.

TABLE
PROFESSIONS PERMITTED AND FORBIDDEN TO JEWS
IN THE CHRISTIAN REPUBLIC
Until 1789

Permitted professions

1. All types of trade, most lucrative jobs: especially groceries, silks, jewelry.
2. Kingdom supplies.
3. Brokerage, peddling.

4. Banks, loan houses.

5. The arts and certain trades. – We say “certain trades” because, in those days, trades were divided into guilds, and the guilds often couldn’t stand Jewish competition or neighbors.

6. Printing. – As soon as printing was invented, historians unanimously agree, Jews were among the first typographers. Their printing works were very famous, especially in Italy and Spain.

7. Astronomy. – Suffice it to cite the Alphonsine Tables. “The Alphonsine Tables have rendered eminent services to astronomy, although, as a result of the progress of this science, they have now lost all their value; their production cost King Alfonso of Castile 400,000 ducats, and it is quite a fine title of glory for the Jews to have found themselves at the head of this important undertaking”. (Bédarride, *les Juifs*, p. 196.)

Professions forbidden as the essence of Christian society.

They are forbidden:

1. To own land, to acquire and exchange property. See reasons given above, I” book, chap. iv, §III.

2. To own Christian slaves and trade in them (contrary to Christian dignity).

3. To have Christian male and female servants (fear of apostasy).

4. Keeping schools for Christians or teaching in universities (security of education was opposed). – But they have their own schools, their own academies, and their scholars are treated with honor by Christian scholars and princes.”

5. To fill jobs in the army.

6. To rank in Parliament (the formation or interpretation of laws could not be entrusted to them in a Christian kingdom).

7. To rank in the Magistracy (the Christian oath and the examination of Christian causes were opposed).

8. To be druggists, pharmacists and hoteliers.

Professions

SOMETIMES PERMITTED TO JEWS, SOMETIMES FORBIDDEN

They were sometimes, on behalf of Christian society:

A. Tax farmers or collectors, tax attorneys.

B. Toll collectors.

C. Favorites of princes, rather than intendants, for the care of finances.

D. Representatives of sovereigns to foreign courts, also for financial matters.

Baillis , particularly in southern France, at the time of the Albigensians. - During the reign of Philip Augustus, a Jew was elevated to the position of Bailli, a highly important office at the time, which gave those holding it the upper hand in the administration of royal justice. This sudden elevation scandalized Rome.... “ (Beugnot, *les Juifs d'Occident*, 1^{re} partie, p. 88.) - In Languedoc, bailiwick functions were entrusted to Jews by Albigensian lords. This circumstance scandalized the Court of Rome, so much so that later, when the Albigensians were reconciled to the Church, they were made to swear, among other things, never to entrust the office of bailiff to a Jew”. (Bédarride, *les Juifs*, p. 185.)

F. Doctors. The reputation of Jewish physicians shone brightly throughout the Middle Ages. Councils often expressly forbade Christians from using Jewish physicians. But their skill was such that kings and peoples alike sought them out. The monuments of the time attest to the fact that there were few great princes who did not wish to have a Jewish physician. Dispensations were then granted by the Church.

GENERAL REMARKS

On every page of ecclesiastical annals, we find Councils complaining about these and other even more important favors granted to Jews, and never tiring of renewing the regulations that excluded them from public functions. The reason for this was that the Councils realized that these attempts at society were fraught with danger for Christian beliefs and morals. They were like the beginnings of bankruptcy for Christian society, and the Church, alarmed, interfered.

This picture shows how unfair is the reproach of those who accuse the Catholic Church, at a time when the State was taking its advice, of having been hard on the Jews: it was only prudent. It refused them freedom of movement, but by no means the exchange of good services. They helped and were helped. Let's be clear about their situation: they were not allowed, nor even sought, to do anything that ran counter to the essence of Christian society: for example, legislative functions, teaching in Christian schools. But they could and did render services to society. They had complete freedom to become merchants, brokers, jewelers, industrialists, astronomers, even doctors, toll collectors and tax prosecutors, in addition to the advantages of their own autonomy, which included their own schools, sciences, literature and courts, within the confines of their jewels. Christian civilization, unable to incorporate them as Jews, sought at least to use them as men. How often they themselves recognized this exchange of good services! "Sidoine Apollinaire, bishop of Clermont, was intimately linked with them, and multiplied his good offices towards them. Saint Ferréol, bishop of Uzès, admitted them to his table and showered them with gifts. Saint Hilaire d'Arles was so much missed by the Jews, that they ran to his funeral to mingle their tears with those of the Christians, and to sing Hebrew hymns to honor his memory. "1 But these good manners in no way diminished the rigorous observance of the rule of prudence: no participation, for them, in the government and development of Christian society; out of their reach, the jobs that require the affirmation of conscience; out of their reach, the avenues that lead to the heart of society! The above table groups together the offices and professions that really led to the heart of society; the Church forbade them to Jews, and its prohibition, it must be admitted, was full of wisdom.

II

THE CHURCH HAS ALWAYS BEEN PLEASED TO HONOR
ISRAELITE CONVERTS, BUT SHE HAS ALWAYS BEEN
CAUTIOUS ABOUT CONVERSIONS. HER PRUDENCE HAS
NOT BEEN IMITATED BY THE CHRISTIAN NATIONS.

The Church's precautions were also remarkable in relation to another extremely delicate matter: conversions and baptisms, which gave Jews living in the Middle Ages official entry into Christian society.

"When a Jew was converted in Rome, a cardinal was usually his godfather, and he drove him around for two weeks in his carriage, dressed in white satin "1.

"Not only did they become citizens as soon as they had been baptized, but they were made priests and even granted honorary distinctions and titles of nobility "2.

"In Spain, Jews were allowed to take the names of the families who baptized them or adopted them. For the most part, these were the most distinguished families in Castile.... In Portugal, Jewish converts were sponsored by the kingdom's most prominent figures. They were lavished with distinctions and nobility, and affiliated with the greatest families. There is therefore no doubt that the principal houses of Portugal were Jewish, or that the Jews took their names from them. "1

These Christian procedures were full of delicacy. Because man is sensitive to honor, and because the Jewish people, after having been the first of peoples, had become the last by their deicide, the Catholic Church, a tactful mother, as soon as she can rehabilitate a Jew, somehow manages to make him forget past contempt, and restores to the child of Israel the rank that was his. Doesn't it seem that mercy, which has compared itself to the hen, is taking repentant Jerusalem under its wings?

However, while experiencing great joy at these returns, the Church in the Middle Ages never ceased to be circumspect and cautious. The return of the sheep did not allow it to forget the safety of the fold. Far from it! Indeed, conversions were not always

sincere. As one author has remarked: "Conversions of Jews, as we moved further away from apostolic times, became very rare and very suspect. Most of those who, out of fear or other motives, became Christians, entered the Church only as spies and disguised enemies, as Joseph called his brothers, before the time had come to manifest themselves to them. And the further back we go from the first centuries, the more their obstinacy has increased, so that the sincere conversion of a single Jew is a prodigy. "1 There is much truth in this observation. The further we have moved away from the early days of Christianity, the more difficult and suspicious conversions of Jews have become. That's why, before the honors with which the Church liked to surround converts, it took the most vigilant care to rigorously examine conversions.

This wise rule, from which the Church has never departed, has hardly ever been followed by the Christian nations, daughters of the Church. In our opinion, based on the most serious and well-informed authors, this explains both the immense danger the Spanish nation was in for a moment, and the creation of the terrible tribunal of the Spanish Inquisition that followed. A precise clarification on this subject will not be without importance.²

III

SPAIN'S GENEROUS BUT IMPRUDENT CONDUCT IN THE FIRST CENTURIES OF ITS HISTORY. CLARIFICATION OF THE INQUISITION.

Spain was, from an early date, the refuge of a very large number of Israelite families: in particular, families of the royal tribe of Judah, according to several historians.³ She treated them for a long time with the noblest and most trusting hospitality. Indeed, in principle, the Jews who took refuge in Spain were able to take up almost any public post, becoming bursars, administrators, butlers to kings and grandees, doctors, tax farmers and finance ministers. They were truly happy there, so happy that even today, when the Jewish feast of Tabernacles comes around every year, and citrons are needed, it is not unusual for families to bring them from the land of Spain, in memory of the happiness their forebears once enjoyed there.¹

What was it, then, that suddenly altered Spain's conduct to such an extent that it became cruel, calling to its aid, but distorting it, the tribunal of the inquisition?²

It was the instinct for self-preservation.³

Here's how her danger was formed:

The danger for Catholic Spain came from the fact that a large number of Jews had crept in and insinuated themselves everywhere, thanks to the freedom they had been allowed in principle to hold public office, but above all thanks to two things: medicine and baptisms.

"Through medicine, they penetrated every family, knowing all its secrets. "¹

"But the hidden Jews, who were baptized for form's sake, in order to more easily carry out their plans under the mask of Christianity, were far more dangerous than those in the public professions." ¹

Many of these baptisms had unfortunately originated not only in cunning, but in cruelty. In the inevitable quarrels that arose between Christians and Jews, the young, ebullient and imprudent populations of Spain had often given the Jews a choice between massacre and baptism; "the cutthroats showed clemency, preserving life and prop-

erty only to those who vowed to be Christians and who cried out for baptism: an error that was the cause of a thousand mistakes. A large number of Jews, realizing that baptism would help them to be forgiven, asked for baptism in a holy way, and remained in their sect by intention; apparently Christians, they observed the Judaic law every day. "3 Also Paul de Burgos, a converted Israelite who became bishop of Burgos and tutor to John II, King of Castile, made this recommendation: "That one should never entrust the offices of State and Church to those of one's own nation, because they were accustomed to dissimulation. The Protestant historian Basnage, who reports this testimony, confirms it with the following comment: "After being converted, they never stopped Judaizing, which is what they have always done and still do in Spain. "1

And so the peril of Spain was born.

In these conditions, it is easy to understand why the Inquisition tribunal was a terrible consequence of the instinct for self-preservation, especially when one considers that the time when it was instituted coincided with the anguish of Christian Spain at grips with the Moors, in a supreme struggle under the walls of Granada. And what's more, at that very moment, Spain, in addition to the Talmudic poison it felt circulating in its veins through so many false baptisms, had in its hands terrible proof that it was being betrayed by the Jews, who wanted to hand it over to the Moors: poisoned by them on the inside, betrayed by them on the outside!1

Exasperated, she became cruel. She took two extreme measures:

To avoid being handed over to the Moors, she abruptly and violently expelled all Jews (100,000 at a time) with the famous decree of 1492;

El, to free itself from the false Christians or hidden Jews, it organized the civil Inquisition.

Who, then, if they understand the value of a homeland, and especially a Christian homeland, would blame Spain's severe conduct?

But if our sincerity and the higher views of faith make us admit and accept against our own blood these historical facts about the Inquisition, we shudder at the memory of the cruelties that have distorted the right of self-defense. Yes, Spain was within its rights

in establishing a national security tribunal; but abuse accompanied its operation, and the tribunal often became a cruel and unjust pyre.

Most deplorably, the ashes of the victims were thrown in the face of the Church as a reproach for atrocity, and the Church does not deserve this. Here again, we are happy to stand up for an innocent, accused woman.

Indeed, two things have greatly consoled us in our research into the Inquisition. The first is that the Church carefully and consistently ensured that the searches and sentences of the formidable tribunal applied not to Jews, but to Judaizers. This is quite different. It is untrue, absolutely untrue, that a sincere and avowed Jew, recognized as a Jew, was ever prosecuted and harassed for his religion. The court has only ever sought Judaizers, i.e. Jews disguised as Christians, dreaded, as hypocrites and conspirators, for the Christian faith and the Spanish homeland.¹

The second thing is that while the Spanish Inquisition spilled streams of blood, the Inquisition of Rome never pronounced capital punishment. Indeed, we must carefully distinguish between two kinds of inquisition, for historical truth attests that there were two: one led by the Spanish government, the other led by the Roman Congregation of the Holy Office; the former employed torture and supplication, the latter always avoided them.² So true is this, that at the time of the greatest rigor deployed against Judaizers, they fled Spain to take refuge in Rome: "Those affected or threatened by the Inquisition tried to evade the action of this tribunal: they fled the soil of Spain and went to Rome. "1 This fact is very remarkable and forms a testimony of great force. Yes, to avoid the rigours of the Spanish Inquisition, people ran to take refuge in the arms of Rome, and the Roman Inquisition or the Holy Office always mitigated their sentences. As a result, the history of the Inquisition is full of disputes between Kings and Popes, and we constantly discover the Sovereign Pontiff's desire to keep the Inquisition within the bounds of justice and humanity.²

To sum up:

Spain, originally generous and magnanimous in her hospitality towards the Jews, was imprudent in admitting them indiscriminately

to all jobs, then forcing them to baptism;

She was within her rights when, at a time of supreme danger to her faith and soil, she established the Inquisition against Judaizers;

But she was implacable and cruel in the way she carried out her sentences. It offered the spectacle of a nation which, having too easily trusted itself, and on the point of being lost, had recourse, in its terror, to terror.

This is the true meaning of the Inquisition.

As for the Church, in the face of this exasperated nation and the harshness of morals at the time, it did what it could, with its spirit of indulgence, to save the greatest number of culprits from torment, and to save their souls when it could not save them from the stake. Oh, how just is this assessment of Rome: Borne has constantly been seen to be both the city of orthodoxy and the city of gentleness, pure as a virgin and weak like her.¹

IV

SUMMARY; EXPLANATION AND REALIZATION OF
A MYSTERIOUS BIBLICAL PRAYER, CONCERNING
THE PUNISHMENT OF THE JEWS.

The reader has before his eyes, in the various overviews we have presented, the summary of the Church's conduct towards the Jews, during the past eighteen centuries of Christianity.

11 will now understand the explanation of a mysterious biblical prayer, the meaning of which he has perhaps rarely paid attention to.

On Golgotha, the expiring Christ prayed for his executioners: My Father, forgive them. David, his royal ancestor and prophet, enlightened by Christ's sufferings, and reflecting them in his own misfortunes, had asked this destiny for the guilty:

"Do not exterminate them, Lord... but scatter them by your power, and bring them low, you who are my protector. "1

This mysterious prayer, in which there was, in advance, an echo of the forgiveness of Golgotha, united with justice, was fulfilled to the letter. The Jews were preserved, when they could have been exterminated a thousand times over and disappeared; but, at the same time, they were dispersed and degraded, to the point of being regarded everywhere as the shame and dregs of the human race.

To whom do they owe the fact that they have not been exterminated?

To the Catholic Church.

The nations wanted to exterminate them, but the Church saw to it that they were only belittled.

This formula, taken from the Scriptures, explains all the ups and downs of their painful and bloody dispersion. Undoubtedly, the Church could not prevent their chastisement, which was intertwined with secondary causes, in these times of hardship through which they and she herself were passing; but she constantly endeavored, with her spirit of gentleness, to temper this chastisement and to soften it. And she succeeded. Divine Mother, you were admirable in your gentleness and prudence: gentleness, to enlighten, protect and reassure the Jews;

prudence, to preserve for the Christian populations the superiority or first rank conferred upon them by the appeal made to Gentiles: not approving the excesses of the Christian people against the Jews, and not allowing the latter to invade the Christian people.

Don't exterminate them, but belittle them! The Church's conduct has truly been the translation into action of this prayer of the royal Prophet. She fought for the lives of the poor Jews against the wrath of the multitudes as well as against the greed of princes, against summary executions as well as against the severity of the governmental inquisition. But while she protected their lives with one hand, she protected the rights of the Christian people against them with the other. When people complained about them, she said: "Don't exterminate them, belittle them.

CHAPTER IV

IN CONTRAST TO THE ABOVE ALL THE
GREAT ENEMIES OF THE CHURCH WERE
EQUALLY BITTER ENEMIES OF THE JEWS

I

IT IS REMARKABLE THAT ALL THE GREAT ENEMIES OF THE
CHURCH HAVE BEEN EQUALLY BITTER ENEMIES OF THE JEWS.
MUHAMMAD'S HATRED OF THEM; HIDEOUS TESTIMONIES.

It is a remark to which attention has not been sufficiently fixed, that all the bitter enemies of the Church have been equally bitter enemies of the remnants of Israel. Only Julian the Apostate loved the Jews while hating Christians. Indeed, it is well known that, with the aim of putting the lie to the Galilean's prophecies, he set about collecting the stones and rubble of the Temple, in order to smother the growing tree of the Church beneath this resurrected architecture. A few isolated persecutors, obscure tyrants, may also have used the Jews against the Christians. But, generally speaking, the men of darkness and evil, the heresiarchs, those whom the Fathers of the Church call antichrists, enveloped the Church and Israel in the same hatred. Their hands sought to uproot the great tree, and their feet trampled on the severed branches, the withered sons of Jacob. Isn't that strange? It seems so implausible that testimonies are needed. The reader will understand better, after reading them, the explanation we give, following them, of this two-edged hatred.

Of all the antichrists or men of evil, three have most profoundly dislodged and desolated the Church: Mohammed, Luther and Voltaire. But how did they treat the remnants of Israel?

MAHOMET

AND HIS HATRED OF THE JEWS

1. Historians' admissions

"To convince themselves of the truth of the Prophet's procla-

mations, the inhabitants of Mecca decided to send a deputation to the Jewish rabbis of Medina, who were considered the holiest authorities on religious matters. The delegates asked Muhammad three questions. His answers, filled with gross errors, aroused their laughter and biting mockery. Hence Muhammad's deep-seated hostility to the Jews. - The names of the rabbis have been preserved." (Sprenger, Mohammed, III, p. 20 ff. - Ibn-HiscHAM, Vie de Mohammed, p. 551, 597-599.)

"It was then that Mohammed began to replace persuasion with violence. Abu-Bekr himself, usually so cautious and moderate, entered the Jewish school in Medina and beat up Rabbi Finhâc". (Ibn-Hischam, p. 562.)

"Arab authors claim that, in principle, the Jews sent Muhammad twelve of their teachers to help him compose the Koran. However, they soon became his most implacable enemies; Mohammed conceived the same hatred for them, and persecuted them to his last moments." (Malo, Hist. des juifs, p. 170.)

"Mohammed was, if not always, at least very angry with the Jews." (Hottinger, Historia orientalis (1651), in-4°, p. 215.)

"Mohammed hated this nation with a vengeance." (Basnage, Hist. des juifs, t. VIII, chap. ix, n° xvn.)

"He reproached them at every moment for their hatred of the prophets they had massacred, because he regarded himself as a new prophet whom the Jews hated." (Id., t. VIII, chap. ix, nos. xv and xvn.)

"He began by showing the Jews a great deal of consideration, but soon this feeling gave way to fury. His Al-coran resounded with violent exclamations against men opposed to his doctrine; and the Muslims, who argued with the sword, locked the Jews into the proscription of all religions different from Islamism." (Grégoire, Essai sur la régénération des juifs, pp. 25-26).

2. Muhammad's harsh and insulting words against the Jews, contained in the Koran

We quote only the main ones, as the Koran is full of curses against them.

"Ignominy in this world will be theirs. "Chap. ii, v. 79.

“God has cursed them. May God’s curse reach them!” Ibid. v. 82, 85.

“They fill their machine guns with fire. God will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor absolve them. A painful torment awaits them.” Ibid. v. 169.

“You who have received the Scriptures, believe, before we blot out the features of your faces and turn them to the opposite side (twist your necks). Believe, before we curse you, as we cursed those who broke the Sabbath... We turned them into vile apes.” Chap. iv, v. 50, and chap. ii, v. 61.

“Those who refuse to believe in our signs, we will bring close to them a blazing fire. As soon as their skin is consumed by the fire, we will clothe them with another, to make them experience a cruel torment. God is powerful and wise. Chap. iv, v. 59.

“Among them you will see a great number running headlong towards iniquity, towards injustice. How abominable are their deeds!

“If it were not the teachers and priests who prevented them from indulging in impiety, what horrors would they not commit?

“Let their hands be bound about their necks; let them be accursed for the price of their blasphemies.” Chap. v, v. G7, G8, G9.

“Neither their wealth nor their children will avail them anything with God; they will be the victims of eternal fire.

“Oh, how they lie!

“Satan has taken hold of them. They are Satan’s party. Chap. lviii, v. 18, 49, 20.

5. Muhammad’s cruelties against the Jews

Around 750 Jews, including Rabbi Hoyyeyy, had their throats slit in a marketplace in Medina. Hoyyeyy was the last to be killed. As he was being led to his death, Mohammed said to him: “God has led you to your doom. –I do not fear death,” replied the valiant rabbi; “I am not at all sorry that I declared war on you, and even today, as I leave this world, I proclaim that you are an impostor.” So he knelt down and was beheaded (Ibn-Hischam, *Vie de Mohammed*, p. 690 ff. – Wakidi, translated by Welliausex, Mohammed in Médina, p. 575).

In Medina there was a Jewish poet by the name of Cab, son of

Al-Aschraf. This poet was a dangerous adversary for the Prophet; the Prophet decided to have him killed. "Who wants to deliver me," he cried one day, "from the son of Al-Aschraf?" The Medinese Mohammed, son of Maslama, offered to accomplish this feat, but asked Mohammed to allow him to use trickery and lies. The Prophet allowed him to do so. Cab was cruelly murdered (Caussin de Pebceval, *Essai sur l'hist. des Arabes*, III, p. 85 ff - Ibn-Hischam).

Mahomet, at the head of 1,400 infantrymen and 500 cavalrymen, marched against the Israelites of Kheibar, who locked themselves in their fortified castles. Gradually, all the forts fell into the hands of the Muslims; a large number of Jews were taken prisoner, including Kinâna, son of Ar-Rabi, cl his fiancée, Cafiyya, daughter of Hoyyeyy. Cafiyya was very beautiful, and Mohammed wished to take her as his wife; he sent for her fiancé Kinâna, and, under the pretext of making him confess where he had hidden the treasures entrusted to his care, he subjected him to atrocious torture, put him to death, and then married Cafiyya. All the fighters who had taken up arms were killed; nearly nine hundred died in the process. (IbN-Hischam, p. 760 ff.)

4. Hereditary hatred of Jews by Mohammed's successors and followers

Hatred of the Prophet was hereditary among the peoples of Islam. "When Mohammed died (652), the Jews were convinced that the Arabs would leave them in peace. The Arabs were already too fanatical. The Koran became the fundamental book (the code) for a large part of humanity in three parts of the world, and, known to be full of hateful sentences against the sons of Judaism, it raised the Mohammedan peoples in hatred against them. So great was the fanaticism of the second caliph Omar, a savage and energetic nature, that he broke the alliance concluded between Mohammed and the Jews of Chaïbar and Wadil-Kora, and drove them out of their territory, along with the Christians of Nagaran, so that the sacred soil of Arabia would no longer be desecrated by Jews and Christians. The countries formerly occupied by the Jews were ceded by Omar to the Mahornetan warriors". (Graetz, *Hist. des juifs*, p. 151, 152.)

"In many places, Jews are exposed to all kinds of abuse from

the Mahornetans. They are spat at in the streets, abused with words and beaten; children chase them with stones. They suffer this violence patiently, because if they thought of defending themselves, they would run the risk of being torn to pieces by the rabble. In truth, those who have connections with the King and the Great Ones are given a little more consideration. They're the only ones allowed to wear shoes, the others only have rush shoes. They must leave them on every time they pass a mosque or enter the Prince's house, on pain of caning or imprisonment, from which they can only escape by paying a heavy fine". (De Boissi, *Dissertations critiques sur l'hist. des juifs*, t II, p. 171, 172.)

"Wherever the flag of Mohammed flies, the Jewish people are persecuted." (Malo, *Hist. des juifs*, p. 559.)

II

From Luther; hideous testimonies.

LUTHER

AND HIS HATE FOR JEWS

1. Historians' confessions

"Luther often censured them with that impetuosity of genius that took him beyond moderation. Above all, he criticized them for being deceitful. The rabbis, irritated by Luther's treatment of them, claim that this leader of the Reformation had asked their brothers in Frankfurt for a large sum of money, with the promise of paying them by praising them in his books, and that they refused. But this tale is ridiculous." (Basnage, t. IX, 5th part, chap. xxxiv, n° 2.)

"Luther wrote against the Jews. He often let himself be carried away, by the impetuosity of his character, beyond the bounds of justice and moderation." (Halévy, *Hist. des juifs*, p. 148, 149.)

2. Luther's rudeness and harshness against the Jews

One of Luther's most famous historians, Audin, felt the need for this preamble in his preface:

"It is Luther's own words that we are reproducing, and his words in all their nakedness. For a moment we hesitated, not daring to translate images that revolted both the eye and the ear; but we were emboldened by the thought that it was not our place to blush for Luther. If there is shame, let it fall on his brow.

We endorse Audin's preamble. Like him, we hesitated for a moment to record the quotations that follow. We passed over them because of the contrast to be established, for the benefit of truth, between the language of the Popes in favor of the Jews and the language of the heresiarch against them. However, decency has not allowed us to quote the most odious passages, not even in Latin.

The quotations are taken from Luther's book *Les Juifs et leurs Mensonges* (t. VII, in-folio, Wittemberg, Thomas Klug, 1558).

"One would reason in vain with these brutes (p. 1G8, recto).

"The Jews stand disdainfully in their synagogues, true pigsties, where all day long they let nothing escape from their lips but the most shameful and impudent blasphemies (p. 172, verso).

“Oh, how dear the Book of Esther is to the Jews, so well suited to their bloodthirsty and poisonous sentiments! There is no people under the sun so greedy for vengeance, so thirsty for blood, believing themselves to be the people of God only to slit the throats and immolate the nations (p. 175, verso).

“If the Jews are in God’s eyes the holy people because they possess God’s words and law, the devils in hell are more worthy than the Jews to be God’s people, for the devils possess God’s word, which they know better than the Jews (p. 176, verso).

“O shame, O horrible crime, that you damned Jews should drag through the mud the words of God so holy, so magnificent, so consoling, and so blatantly display your shameful avarice! You are not worthy to look at the Bible, let alone read it: instead of touching the pearl and balm of God’s word, you should be handling pig excrement (p. 188, verso).

“If there were a fair, where an ounce of modesty was exposed for sale, I’d give the Jews a few gold coins to buy some, and get themselves an honest forehead (p. 189, recto).

“Know, Christian, that after the devil you have no crueler, more envenomed, more violent enemy than a true Jew, who wants to be seriously Jewish. There may be Epicureans among them who think that oxen and geese have faith; but all are zealous for circumcision. They are also often accused by history of having poisoned wells, kidnapped little children, drawn Christian blood by opening their veins, as at Trent, Weissensée, etc. They vigorously deny the thing; but they are not the only ones. They vigorously deny the thing; the will to commit these atrocities is not lacking in them, and whenever they can perpetrate this crime in secret or openly, expect nothing better from them (p. 189, verso; p. 190, recto).

“They are thieves, robbers, who eat no morsels, wear no threads on their bodies that they have not stolen and taken from us by the most voracious of wear and tear. They, their wives and children, live every day by rapine and theft, practicing brigandage everywhere and proving themselves the most cunning thieves. The usurer is more of a villain than a brigand, and should be hanged from a gallows seven times higher than the ordinary gallows (p. 197, recto).

“You may think the Jew is nothing, but think again, you fool! (Here, Luther’s blasphemous words send shivers down our spines, p. 201, verso; 202, recto).

“Who is preventing the Jews from returning to Judea? The roads and countries that lead there are open to them. Let them go on foot, on horseback, in ships, let them fly if they have wings! We’ll provide them with provisions for the journey, just so we can be freed from this disgusting dregs. They are for us a heavy burden, the calamity of our properties; they are a pestilence in the midst of our lands (p. 205, verso).

“I have read and heard many stories about the Jews, namely: how they poisoned water sources, how they committed homicide in secret. I’ve heard how one Jew sent another, through a Christian, a small vase filled with fresh blood. I’ve also heard of a barrel which, when emptied, contained a corpse. How many crimes and thefts of children can we not accuse them of? After the devil, the Christian has no crueller enemy than a Jew. Whoever takes pleasure in showing hospitality to these ,

vipers, these little devils of the devil, to pamper them, feed them and bring them up, let him treat them as cherished friends and surround them with tenderness! And if that’s not enough, let him... (here our pen passes turpitudes) and then boasts of having been merciful (p. 220, recto).

“If God had not given me another Messiah than the one the Jews desire and expect, I would rather be a pig than a man. Indeed, the pig in his mire enjoys his delusions, his filth and mud; he takes his sleep, he snores, he fears no king, no lord; death or hell do not frighten him; he is not afraid of the terrors of the devil or of divine wrath. He lives without worry, to the point of not even thinking about the bran that is his food. The Messiah the Jews await will never give felicity comparable to that of this pig (p. 211, recto and verso).”

3. Luther’s advice to princes and magistrates on how to get rid of the Jews

This advice is contained in the same book by Luther, quoted above: *The Jews and their Lies*.

1° “To put an end to the blasphemous doctrine of the Jews, it would first be useful to set fire to their synagogues, and whatever escaped the fire would have to be covered with sand and mud, so that no one would ever see a tile or a stone (p. 204, recto). If Moses were alive today, he would not fail to set fire to the synagogues and houses of the Jews (p. 204, verso).

2° “Their private homes would have to be destroyed and devastated; they could be housed in stables or tents like simple gypsies (p. 204, verso).

5° “Their prayer books and talmuds, in which idolatry, lies, hurtful words and blasphemies are taught, should be taken away from them (ibid.).

4° “Rabbis would be forbidden under penalty of death to teach, because they had lost all right to do so (ibid.).

5° “Jews would be denied all protection and means of communication in all provinces and duchies (ibid.).

6° “Very severe orders from the magistrates would forbid them to practice usury; all available money would be taken from them; all their gold and silver would be deposited in the hands of the magistrates, and here is the reason: what they possess, they have stolen and extorted through their usury, since they are exiles without patrimony. The money thus sequestered would be used for this purpose: if a Jew converted seriously, he would be given 100, 200 or 500 florins, depending on his quality; this money would be used to help the infirm, convalescents, etc. (p. 205, recto).

7° “Young and robust Jews, both men and women, would be required to work in order to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow (p. 205, recto).

“And if, by forcing them to work on our land, we were to fear that they would cause us some damage to our bodies, our wives, our children, our families, our domestic animals, etc., as we can easily suppose from these vipers unaccustomed to work, we would have to make them give up and then chase them out of the country (p. 205, verso).

“In short, very good princes and lords, who have Jews under your dependence, act, deliberate on the means to be taken.

“Do not take their defense, do not eat and drink with them, do not grant them hospitality, do not share their dementia and demonic fury.... They are the wicked, perverse, venomous, satanic beasts who, for fourteen hundred years and more, have been and still are the ruin of governments, black plagues and our cancers. In short, the Jews are devils incarnate for us; they no longer have a human heart for us nations: and they learn these things from their rabbis, in the synagogues, nests of foul spirits (p. 206, recto, 206, verso).”

Other advice given by Luther to princes and magistrates.

1 “The synagogues should be set on fire, so as to reduce to ashes these offices of blasphemy; oil, sulfur and pitch should be thrown on the fire to increase the blaze; we should even endeavor to add the fire of hell, so that God may see that we are seriously overwhelmed, and that the whole mummy may witness that we have tolerated these houses out of ignorance, and that we have illuminated them as they deserve.

2. 4. “All books, prayer formulas, Talmudic stories and the entire Bible should be taken away from them, without leaving them a single page, and reserved for those who convert.

5° “They would be forbidden under penalty of death to praise God publicly on our territory, to pray, to teach, to sing. Let them do these things in their own country, or wherever they wish.

4° “Finally, let them be forbidden to pronounce the name of God before us. Whoever hears a Jew pronounce the name of God, let him denounce him to the magistrates, or throw pellets of pig excrement at his head and drive him away like a dog (p. 209, recto and verso).

“If I had the right to rule on the fate of the Jews, I would enjoin them, under pain of death, to convince, within the space of eight days, by solid arguments, that we worship several gods instead of one; that if they did, we would be ready to convert in a single day to Judaism and receive circumcision; if not, would smooth treated as they would have deserved (p. 210, recto-verso).

“I beg our magistrates to exercise severe mercy on these wretches, if by chance it can contribute to their salvation. Following the example of doctors who, when poultices no longer work, resort to

incisions and cauterizations, let the magistrates use this hard and severe pity; let them take care to set fire to their synagogues; let them forbid them everything I have mentioned above; let them force them to work. And if all this is to no avail, we shall be forced to expel them like rabid dogs, so as not to share their blasphemies with them, and expose ourselves to incur divine wrath and eternal damnation (p. 211).”

III

From Voltaire; hideous testimonials.

VOLTAIRE

AND HIS HATRED OF THE JEWS

1. Historians' confessions

In *Lettres de quelques juifs à M. de Voltaire*, a model of powerful and courteous controversy, the author reproaches the philosopher that "among all the other peoples of the world, the Jewish people is the only one for whom his philosophy has no entrails".

The Israelite historian Graetz states:

"Voltaire, who was in his writings a true enchanter and a scholar, and in his private life a fool and a slave to his baser passions, had sought a quarrel with the Jews: he wanted the whole world to despise them and their past.

"We can confidently accuse Voltaire of a large number of compromising affairs, especially concerning the diamond trade; he deceived his matchmakers; he made up lies, fabricated forgeries, etc., etc., and with this he always believed that it was he who was being deceived.

"King Frederick both admired and despised this diabolical genius. He decided to expel him from his kingdom because of a compromising affair with a Jewish jeweler.

"The most salient traits of his character were vengeance and avarice. He seized every opportunity to speak ill of the Jews, and delighted in exercising his hateful satire against the Jewish nation of his time and of aucimi time." (Graetz, *Hist. des juifs*, l. XI, p. 52-54)

The Archives israélites "read:

"Voltaire, in his war against Judaism, was acting in bad faith. At the very moment when he wrote to Isaac Pinto, of Bordeaux: I have never hated your nation, he was adding new calumnies to his old accusations... The whole thing exudes nothing but the blindest hatred". (*Arch. isr.*, May 1882, p. 152.)

2. Voltaire's dislike and contempt for God's ancient people in Palestine

If you look up the word *juifs* (les) in the analytical table of Voltaire's works, you'll find the following. (We have consulted the

70-volume edition by M. Beuchot, in-8, Paris 1840).

Roman numerals indicate volumes; Arabic numerals, pages.

1, Do l'opinion qu'ils descendants d'une troupe de brigands que le roi Actisan bannit d'Égypte, après avoir les fait mutiler, XXIX, 451; XLIII, 398; XLVI, 441.

2, Cruelty of their prayers. XV, 499.

5. Enumeration of the murders the Jews committed on their brothers, XI, 255; XL, 008 ff; XLVIII, 459, 4G0, 481.

4. If their wives... (we delete the rest for modesty's sake), XXX, 484.

5. If they ate human flesh, *ibid*, XVII, 407.

G. their human sacrifices, IX, 294; XV, 4G3.

7. That their Law is the only one in the universe that ordered the immolation of ks men. XLVI, IGG et seq.

8. Jewish children immolated or eaten by their mothers, IX, 294; X, 474; XXVI, 408; XXX, 487.

9. Their history was the history of cannibals, XLIX, 180.

40. had sought-after tortures among them, XLVIII, 5G5.

41. Their hatred of all nations, XV, 490, 202; XLIII, 555 .t ff.

42. Why they hated the nations, XXX, 459; XLIII, 418.

15. The nations' hatred of them, as a result of their superstitions and barbarities, XVII, 54; XXXVII, 64.

44. Turpitudes for which they are blamed, XXVII. 404.

45. Their nation is the only one where laws have been forced to prohibit bestiality, XLI, 505.

16. On their superstitions, XLIV, 118 ff; L, 42à.

17. Were always infatuated with sorcery, XLIV, 422.

48. Depuis quand font métier de la magie, XV, 158; L, 428.

49. Had no industry or philosophy, XXX, 458.

20. Where and when trained in the art of usury, XXX, 462.

21. Were everywhere usurers, according to the privilege and blessing of their Law, and everywhere abhorred by the theme reason, XVII, 53.

3. Voltaire's blasphemy in his interpretation of the Holy Bible
Same remark as for Luther. Our pen cannot reproduce Voltaire's

horrible blasphemies and language. The following is but a fragment sufficient, and beyond, to enlighten and disgust the reader.

“After the passage of the Red Sea, Moses’ brother made the Jews another god, and that god was a calf. To punish his brother, Moses ordered the priests to kill their sons, their brothers, their fathers; and these priests killed twenty-three thousand Jews, who let their throats be slaughtered like cattle.

“After this butchery, it’s not surprising that this abominable people sacrifices human victims to their god, whom they call Adonai. It was according to this law of cannibals that Jephthah, some time later, immolated his own daughter.

“It’s not enough that twenty-three thousand men had their throats cut for a calf; another twenty-four thousand were immolated for having traded with idolatrous daughters: a worthy prelude, a worthy example of persecution in matters of religion.

“These people are advancing through the deserts and rocks of Palestine. This is your beautiful land,” said God to them: “slaughter all the inhabitants, kill all the male children, kill the married women, reserve for yourselves all the little girls...

“Having crossed the Jordan on dry land, like the sea, these people are now in the promised land. The first person to treacherously introduce these holy people is a prostitute named Rahab. God joins in with this prostitute; he brings down the walls of Jericho with the sound of a trumpet, the holy people enter this city, over which they had, by their own admission, no right, and they massacre the men, women and children, etc.” (Vol. XL, p. G08-G12, in *Mélanges*, t. IV.).

“The Jews in the desert actually worshipped a chest which we call an ark, imitating in this several nations who walked their sacred little marmosets in chests....

“The Jews claimed that Aaron’s rod and a bushel of manna were kept in their holy chest, and two oxen dragged it in a cart; the people fell before it with their faces to the ground, and dared not look at it. One day, Adonai caused fifty thousand seventy Jews to die a sudden death, for having worn’ the sight on his chest, and contented himself with giving hemorrhoids to the Philistines who had taken his chest, and sending rats into their fields, until these

Philistines had given him back his chest. Is it possible that the human mind has been dumbed down enough to dream up such infamous superstitions and ridiculous fables?

"The same Jews who claim to have abhorred figures at the behest of their own god, nevertheless kept in their sanctuary, in their Holy of Holies, two cherubim which had the faces of men and the heads of oxen with wings" (Vol. XLIV, p. 118-120, in *Mélanges*, t. VIII.).

4. Voltaire's opinion of the Jews of his time

"You will find in them only an ignorant and barbarous people, who have long joined the most sordid avarice to the most detestable superstition, and the most invincible hatred for all peoples who tolerate and enrich them. Yet they must not be burned." (Vol. XXX, p. 462, in *Dictionnaire philosophique*, t. V, at the word *Jcif*.)

"My uncle was connected with the most learned Jews in Asia. They confessed to him that their ancestors had been commanded to abhor all nations; and, indeed, of all the historians who have spoken of them, there is not one who does not agree with this truth; and even, if one opens the books of their laws, one finds proof of all this." (*Mélanges*, t. Vil.)

"This little Jewish nation dares to display an irreconcilable hatred against all nations: always superstitious, always greedy of the good of others, always barbarous, groveling in misfortune, and insolent in prosperity." (Vol. XV, in *Es:ai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations*, § 42.)

"These marauds go wherever there's money to be made, just as the Gebras, Banians and Armenians run all over Asia, just as the Isiac priests used to come, under the name of Bohemians, to steal hens from barnyards and tell fortunes. But whether these depreutees of Israel, who sell old breeches to savages, call themselves from the tribe of Naphtali or Issachar, is of little importance; they are no less the greatest beggars who have ever defiled' the face of the globe." (Vol. LXV1II, p. 592, in *Correspondance*, t. XVIII, to M. le chevalier de Lisle, Ferney, December 15, 1775.)

"My tenderness for you laughed more than a word to say to you:

" Vous ÊTES DES ANIMAUX CALCULANTS; TACHEZ d'ÊTRE DES ANIMAUX pensants." (Vol. XXX, pp. 492-495, in

Dictionnaire philosophique, at the word Jews: seventh and last letter.)

5. Voltaire's program for throwing the Church and the Synagogue into the same pit

"It is absolutely necessary to discredit and mock the books of the Bible. Having made a mockery of the serious patriarchs, convinced Moses of ignorance and cruelty, scorned Genesis, it will be pure entertainment to torment the prophets, to assert that their mission was a profession, that they practiced it like any other art ; that a prophet, strictly speaking, was a visionary who gathered the people together and told them his reveries; that they were the vilest kind of men there were among the Jews; that they resembled exactly those charlatans who entertain the people in the squares of large cities. Having reached this point, it will be easy for us to show that a skilful, enterprising man, having acquired in his travels notions of physics, juggling and even magnetism, chose to exploit public credulity in a far-off land, with an ignorant population, separated from Roman civilization by its language and customs, and infatuated with superstitious expectations ; that by applying some passages of Jewish visionaries called prophets, he succeeded in deceiving the crowd, passing himself off as the Messiah, meaning an envoy, a man charged with a mission. With the laughter on our side, we'll have plenty of time to scold the Apostles, the twelve faquins, especially the writers Mark, John, Luke and Matthew; to peel back their gospels, and give him *Hasardés*." (Voltaire, *Bible expliquée*.)

IV

Contrast with papal procedures.

In every Christian library, there is usually a separate place called Hell, where bad books are kept apart. This chapter is a kind of Hell in our book. We only decided to bring these hideous quotations together because a precious and powerful contrast could be deduced in favor of the Truth, and because of the dear Israel to be brought back into the arms of this Truth.

Indeed, let the reader take the trouble to compare the feelings of Mohammed, Luther and Voltaire about the Jews, and the treatment they inflicted on them, with the feelings and treatments we revealed in the heart and conduct of the Popes, in the first chapter of this second book; then, let him pronounce! above all, if he is an Israelite, let him pronounce on which side pity was shown to the poor Jews, and on which side contempt; on which side respect, and on which side indecency; on which side help, and on which side cruelty.

Without delving into the parallel, which the reader will easily do, we merely point out these points of contrast:

Is it the Bible? Mohammed distorts it to his own advantage. Luther would like to take it out of Jewish hands: "Damned Jews, you are not worthy to look at the Bible, let alone read it. Instead of touching the pearl and balm of God's word, you should be handling pig excrement. Voltaire, on the other hand, sullies it with his drool.

But the Popes kept it for the Jews, and had it carefully explained to them. They only forbid the Talmud, which prevents them from smelling the biblical balm and appreciating the pearl of God's word.

What about the Synagogues? Mohammed destroys them. Luther calls them nests of foul spirits and pigsties. He advises magistrates "to set them on fire, to throw sulfur, oil and pitch on them, and to cover the rubble with sand and mud".

In the 17th century, Protestant historian Basnage admits that "there are nine in Rome, nineteen in the countryside, thirty-six in the March of Ancona, twelve in the Patrimony of St. Peter, eleven in Bologna, and thirteen in the Romandiole.

Are we talking about their religious or social future? Moham-

med curses them, may fire fill their entrails! Luther calls them the devil's children, unworthy to pronounce the name of God; they must be hit on the TV with pellets of pig excrement when they pronounce it. Voltaire tells them: You are calculating animals, try to be thinking animals.

But the Pope, with the whole Church, prays for them on Good Friday.

Is it about their expulsion? Mohammed drives them out of Arabia. Luther vows that Europe will get rid of them: "Who is preventing them from returning to Judea? We will provide them with everything necessary for the journey, just so that we can be delivered from this disgusting dregs.

But the Popes open their arms to the fugitives whenever they are expelled from elsewhere, allowing them to settle in their states, and when they learn that the Jews who have long been established in Rome ' are leaving the exiles from Spain in misery, they threaten to expel these harsh and barbaric brothers if they do not come to the aid of their unfortunate brethren.

What about their massacres? Mohammed slits their throats. Luther writes a vile and furious treatise to stir up Germany against them and demands that they be hunted down like rabid dogs. Voltaire simply advised against burning them.

But the Popes rise up with invariable fearlessness whenever they are massacred; they reprobate and anathematize the cutthroats, and shower the poor victims with their majesty, compassion and protection.

The parallel is completed by one of the Bible's secret figures.

Wisdom is depicted seated at the door of the de meures of men, to warn and welcome those who seek her:

Wisdom is full of light, and her beauty does not fade;

She warns those who desire her, and shows herself to them first.

He who watches for her in the morning will find her seated at his door.

She herself turns every which way, to seek out those who are worthy of her.¹

Now, with the support of this biblical figure, as instructive as it is gracious, we ask any spirit of good faith who has taken note of

the documents gathered on the Popes, on Mohammed, on Luther and on Voltaire: at which door does it seem to him that Wisdom is seated, and from which place did she rise to warn, rescue and save the poor Jews?

Is it at Mohammed's door?

Is it at the door of the monk of Wittemberg?

Was it at the door of the Ferney philosopher?

Is it not, rather, at the door of the Vatican?

Oh, may this historical contrast become a beacon on the path of Israel's dispersed people! For this contrast is proof, without a shadow of a doubt, that Truth is full of mercy and compassion, and error, on the contrary, cruel and pitiless. One opens its arms, the other crushes with its foot.

V

Explanation of this hatred. It is inexplicable, if we don't take into account hell, which hates the remnants of Israel because of their future role in God's Church.

But where does this relentlessness of all the opponents of Catholicism against the remnants of Israel come from?

The solution to this question is important if we are to understand the events recounted in the following Books.

Why, then, did the Crescent, an opponent of the Cross to the very core, trample on those Jews who cursed the Crucified One, instead of being helped by them in his relentless struggles against the Cross?

How is it that Luther, who led the nations of the North in the assault on the Church, did not give the Synagogue the nod, but rather scorned it?

Where does it come from that Voltaire, who so hated Christ and called Christianity infamous, enveloped the Jews in this hatred, to the point of saying infamous things about them?

Isn't that surprising? Isn't it bizarre, contradictory? It seems that good politics, if not hatred, should have determined these heresiarchs, these apostates, these antichrists not to disdain the help of allies as willing as the Jews were, armed in war for centuries! Wasn't Hebrew hatred as ancient and enduring as theirs? Were not Caiaphas and Judas past masters, clearing the way for Luther and Voltaire?

There are two possible explanations. But only the second is satisfactory.

The heretics' hateful aversion to the Jews can be explained, firstly, by the very aversion they had to the Catholic Church. After all, isn't the Jewish religion the basis of Catholicism? Now, by wiping out the base represented by the Jewish people, hatred had the certainty and the pleasure of ruining the Church more surely and more radically. That's why, as hatred of the Catholic Church grows and becomes more intense, so too does hatred of the Jewish people. Mohammed put up with the Jews more patiently than Luther, especially in the early days. And Voltaire, who brought hatred of the Church to a

climax, had fits of rage against the Jews.

This explanation, however, does not fully satisfy. To unravel this mystery of relentlessness, we need to look beyond the visible enmities of this world.

There is in fact a higher, invisible enmity that inspires and directs the visible enmities of schismatics, heretics and apostates: that of Satan.

It is primordial, inspiring the others, their confluence.

Now, Satan is not unaware of the designs of divine mercy on the remnants of the deicidal people, the biblical prophets having foretold them. Nor is he unaware of the great role of devotion that awaits this people in their repentance, and the services they will render to God's cause in the consummation of the centuries. That's why he hates its remnants, even though these remnants now hate Christ with him.

This is why he strove to eradicate them through the massacres of the Middle Ages, which he inspired.

That's why, too, he breathed his fury against them into Mohammed, Luther and Voltaire.¹

If we disregard this satanic intervention, the regular hereditary hatred of all these antichrists against the Jews is inexplicable. Mohammed, Luther and Voltaire may have despised and abhorred them as the dregs of the human race, because of the faults and deceit they held against them. But these motives alone would not have imbued their curses and anathemas with the sinister characters that emanate from them like vapors from below!

They were the mouths of Hell, cursing, in advance, in the Jews, even the enemies of Christ, the great reserve of God and the end times.

Man's hatred is blind, Satan's is clairvoyant.

Clairvoyant, we say: but simply in the sense of penetration or perspicacity, because, as a pure spirit, Satan sees and foresees further than men. Nevertheless, his hatred, like the blind hatred of men, leads to misunderstanding, to the catastrophe of all his plans; is he not the eternal error, the eternal vanquished?

As the book progresses, we shall show striking proofs of this foresight and misapprehension.

BOOK THREE

THE TWO WINDS OF HUMANITY

THE ISRAELITES AT THE END OF THE XVIII CENTURY
WHICH OF THE TWO WILL OPEN THE AVENUES OF
SOCIETY TO THEM?

SECTION ONE

CHRISTIAN SUPPORT FOR ISRAELITES
IN THE 17th AND 18th CENTURIES

CHAPTER ONE

THE PUBLIC'S ANIMADVERSIONS AGAINST THE JEWS
BECAME MUCH LESS INTENSE THE REASONS FOR THIS
APPEASEMENT

I

Towards the end of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries, a breath of humanity, more vehement than in the past, began to penetrate everywhere, including the Jews. In the eighteenth century, however, it seemed to come from two opposite shores: from Catholicism, as a beneficent breath, and from philosophism, as a stormy breath. The importance of studying these two winds.

When the historian thinks back to the decline of the 17th century, it is indisputable that he feels a breath of humanity rising up in the world, becoming stronger and stronger, gaining ground and penetrating everywhere, reaching and encompassing the Jews themselves towards the end of the 18th century. Enough of slavery, enough of exclusion, enough of inequality: this was the feeling that was gradually spreading in people's minds and aspirations. All that suffers, all that is humiliated, all that does not yet enjoy civil rights, raises its head and shudders. American independence is the signal for this great movement of emancipation. "From the remotest corners of old Europe, people were moved by the news of what the new world was doing. No one quite understood the deep, secret cause

of the emotion they felt; but everyone listened to the distant noise as a sign: what it heralded, they did not yet know. It was like the voice of John crying out from 'the depths of the desert that new times are at hand. "1 Soon France, blessed with Louis XVI as its king, made it clear that it would yield the leadership of this generous movement to no one. She encouraged Washington in America, abolished the Edict of Nantes in her own bosom to allow Protestants to run for office and honors, and finally prepared to convene the *Etats généraux*, vast assizes where a generous audacity promised to correct abuses and make justice reign. No more unfortunate, forgotten or despised people; free men everywhere, guests, brothers: this is the program that seems to be taking hold and is set to triumph. It's as if mankind feels it has reached the fullness of its strength, a clear understanding of its duties, and that at this moment, looking around it with a proud and noble gaze, it wants the whole globe to be ordered in social justice and equity.

It was this universal breath of humanity that, at the end of the eighteenth century, reached the old Jewish people themselves, and made them tremble. At first, this breath reached them only indirectly, in passing: the poor Jews were so isolated, relegated to the bottom of the social ladder! But in the end, this breath, spreading everywhere, inevitably reached them. Lacretelle was permeated by it when, pleading on behalf of two Jewish clients, he said in 1707 before the Sovereign Court of Nancy: "We have overloaded the scales of justice with the all too real faults of the Jewish nation; can't we also include a few virtues?... They have virtues as well as vices. Who will answer us that it is not up to us to extirpate the one and increase the other?

This breath of humanity, which leaves no unfortunate, no captive untouched, which embraces all, it is of the utmost importance that we analyze it, that we unravel its elements, that we know where it comes from and where it's going. This is the key to understanding events, not only at that time, but today and in the future.

Coming out of the Gospel, born with the preaching of the Gospel, working the world slowly but surely ever since, this breath is not new. In the eighteenth century, however, it came from two shores

at once: from Catholicism, as a beneficent breath; from philosophism, as a stormy breath.

At first glance, it seems to be the same breath of humanity. Christian breath, philosophical or philanthropic breath, they seem to merge and pursue the same path. Nevertheless, the goal is far from being the same, and their final work, as we shall see, is very different. This is the dualism of God's renewed people of old. On one side was the kingdom of Judah; on the other, the 'kingdom of Israel; both called themselves, but not with the same accuracy, the people of God. Similarly, the breath of humanity is with Catholicism, it is also with philosophism; there will however be an abyss between the results of the two breaths, particularly with regard to the Jewish question.

Let's begin with the Christian breath.

II

From the seventeenth century onwards, the animadversions of the Christian population against the Jews became less intense. Causes of this appeasement. In no way should it be attributed to the emergence of Protestantism.

We're in the 17th and 18th centuries. What was it about the Jews that the Christian breath produced in particular at that time?

Are there any new ways of dealing with them?

Not in the conduct of the Church. In the eighteenth century, it showed itself to be what it had been since the first centuries of their blindness and misfortune: full of respect, compassion and mercy, but also circumspect and cautious. It was in the people's attitude towards them that a transformation took place. The age-old animadversions between Christians and Jews have become less and less intense, and are even tending to disappear. The Christian spirit triumphed. Massacres of Jews, such as occurred in the Middle Ages, seem set to end forever. Accusations of poisoning fountains and rivers no longer seem possible. There are still, from time to time, muffled rumblings against these survivors, who survive to inherit forever! But we feel we're nearing the end of the storm that has tossed them about among the Nations. On both sides, if we don't love each other yet, we'd at least like to stop hating each other.

What are the causes of this appeasement?

Superficial or ill-considered writers have claimed that we owe it all to the Reformation, to the free examination that brought all consciences into the open, and to the spirit of rationalism that disarmed all positive religions. Many naive children of Israel have believed and still believe in the blessings of Luther's Reformation. In our opinion, this is a mistake, and a crucial one. The negative will never produce the true and the good; the negative will never produce appeasement and charity. Indeed, the chapter that precedes this one says enough about what would have happened to the remnants of Israel, if Luther and Lutheranism had been able to dispose of them as they pleased.

The causes of this appeasement must therefore be sought elsewhere.

We believe we have found them in three facts that form the

dawn of modern times:

1. The spirit of maturity to which the human race had reached;
2. The great commercial ventures into which all peoples were eagerly entering;
3. The woes of the Church and Christian society that were beginning.

III

First cause: the spirit of maturity to which the human race had reached. As nations matured, they became more indulgent.

Hatred is an abnormal feeling in the human heart and in humanity; so is harshness. As we advance in life, we feel the need to become indulgent, to forgive, to be merciful. Indulgence and kindness are signs of maturity. We excuse and sympathize, even though experience has taught us about misery, and we've experienced it ourselves.

These feelings, which are present in the life of the individual, are also present in the development and progress of humanity. At first, the nations that were won over by Christ and became Christians went through phases of harshness and ruthless violence, because, notwithstanding their Christian upbringing, they were young and fiery. This age is merciless, and this judgment must apply to nations as well as individuals. The Church found the nations in a state of savage infancy, and had all the trouble in the world to prevent or repress their violent outbursts. Yes, indeed, as we noted above, from the 10th to the 15th century, the Christian nations were in the age of fiery passions: noble children by virtue of their baptism and their living faith, but with all the instincts of children of the North emerging from the forests. What toil and perseverance did the Church need to transform them? How many painful moments for her in the midst of their progress! how many outbursts of their old nature! how many returns to barbarism! That's how we explain so many terrible departures from harshness in the history of the peoples of the Middle Ages: in particular, the massacres of the Jews.

But under the discreet and sure guidance of Providence, which does not want the Church's care to go unappreciated, the peoples themselves gain experience and maturity. They feel the need for and the price of indulgence. Their blood, their ideas and their morals are calmed. From being turbulent and fiery, the nations of Europe have gradually become more measured, more indulgent, because they have become more mature. From this connection between maturity and indulgence has emerged the magnificent concert of European equilibrium and the arbitration of neutrals, to end disputes with-

out bloodshed. As the human race advances in its destiny, more mature and more thoughtful, it will value even more this feeling of indulgence, this need for agreement. It is in this way that, notwithstanding all the annoyances caused by the genius of evil, this beautiful biblical prophecy, which the Church has already attempted, with some happiness, to realize in the Middle Ages, may perhaps be fully realized: The peoples will turn their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into instruments for moving the earth. One people will no longer draw swords against another, and they will no longer practice fighting. Everyone will sit under his vine and under his fig tree. This is what the Lord of hosts said with his own mouth.¹ This greater realization would be the fruit of a special grace from God, but also of the perfect maturity of the human race.

Returning to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is precisely this move towards maturity, and a better-understood sense of indulgence, that is causing Christian populations and the remnants of Israel to begin to look at each other, at this time, with less hostile, less defiant eyes. People were tired of quarrelling, especially Christians: Christian charity was then called Saint François de Sales, Saint Vincent de Paul. The Jews are tired of having waited for the Messiah; the Christians are tired of having failed to make them understand and find him in Jesus Christ. The solution is left to mercy. We sense that only mercy has the power to convince. With this presentiment, we feel the need to prepare the way for infinite mercy by becoming merciful ourselves. So people became more tolerant of Jews. They no longer want to extinguish Israel's smoldering wick...

IV

Second cause: the great commercial ventures to which people took a liking with the discovery of the New World. Freed from the services of the Jews, people have less frequent conflicts with them.

The second cause of appeasement seems to us to have been the great commercial enterprises into which people entered.

The feudal regime, alongside its family advantages – for feudal organization, as we recognized earlier, was truly that of a family – did have its disadvantages. This should come as no surprise, since the Middle Ages were merely a stage, a flowering, not a definitive state, as the name suggests. One of its disadvantages was that it did little to encourage trade.

Indeed, apart from the clergy, what kind of people were the nations made up of in those days? Lords and serfs, for the most part. The former, given over to hunting and military exploits, had no thought of increasing their fortunes through trade; they would have scorned it, had they considered it. The latter didn't have the ease of leaving their cottages to circulate nature's products. So trade and its resources naturally fell into the hands of the Jews.¹ It followed that the Jew was necessary. There's some truth in this picturesque little picture: "The Jews were necessary to the social body like the pegs and nails used in a great edifice to bind all its parts together. If you were ill, you called a Jew; if you wanted to buy a piece of cloth, the Jew sold it; if you wanted rain to plow the land, the Jew was indispensable in his capacity as astrologer and sorcerer; finally, when the baron himself wanted to have linen and a fine pourpoint, he was obliged to have recourse to a Jew. The son of Israel had an authority that the others did not have, when in his hut, sitting on rags, he could be seen holding the magic wand and the purse strings. "1

The Jew was therefore necessary. This inevitably led to conflicts between these unique vendors and the local population, who were always their tributaries. The exasperation of being obliged to invariably resort to the Jew, the jealousy of his gold, but also the Hebraic reprisals through greed and usury: what causes quarrels!

With the discovery of America and the Cape of Good Hope, a welcome revolution took place. People's aversion to trade suddenly disappeared. The peril that now surrounded long-distance voyages gave new lustre to trade, and reconciled it with those who had hitherto seen it only as a means of enriching themselves at the expense of others. Numerous fleets criss-crossed the seas, bringing wealth of all kinds to Europe. Emulation and industry are on the move everywhere. The old ways are dying out. Public credit is founded. "A "simple bourgeois" from Paris can gather in his "house more pleasures than the ancient kings of Asia at Suze or Ecbatane. "1

From then on, Jews were no longer needed. The Christian populations are in a way freed from their services, and consequently a considerable cause of quarrel and conflict is eliminated.

V

Third cause: the great misfortunes of the Church and Christian society begin. A picture of these misfortunes; and misfortune brings us closer together.

The Reformation, as we have said, was not in the least a cause of appeasement in Jewish and Christian quarrels. But the misfortunes engendered first by the Reformation, then by Jansenism and Philosophy, brought not only appeasement, but even rapprochement. It's quite different. Schism and heresy divide; misfortune brings people together.

Indeed, has misfortune not received the blessed mission of reconciling, by making us forget, under the tears that erase, mutual wrongs? Hands meet and embrace when hearts are in trial and homes in mourning. We can even foresee, according to biblical data, that when one day the hands of the people of Israel and the Christian people are completely reunited, it is trial that will have prepared the way for this plan of divine grace.

This is how, in the seventeenth and fifteenth centuries, rapprochement began under the blows of misfortune.

Notwithstanding the splendid discoveries of the Indies and a new world, the horizon of Christian society had darkened. Nations were emancipating themselves and going mad. The Church will enter a state of widowhood and desolation.

Indeed:

Christian morality is struck to the heart. "In the room where Saint Louis had slept, Sardanapalus lay. Women taken from the last muds of the world played with the crown of France; descendants of the Crusaders populated disgraced antechambers with their adulation, and kissed, in passing, the reigning dress of a courtesan bringing back from the throne to their homes the vices they had worshipped.

"Instead of the clawed plowshare, a filthy youth knew only how to wield sarcasm against God and shamelessness against man.

"Below them, the bourgeoisie, more or less imitators of this royal corruption, trailed behind, leaving their lost sons in their wake, as we see behind the mighty kings of solitude, the lions and their ilk,

smaller and viler animals that follow them to lick up their share of the spilled blood. "1

There is no oratorical exaggeration in these quotations. Recently published documents on the last years of the Ancien Régime confirm their accuracy.²

It was at this time that contempt for the holy laws of marriage began to become universal; families feared to grow, and the number of children was limited: so much so that the Jews, legally threatened with such a monstrosity, made it the object of a bloody reproach to Christian society, in a memorandum addressed to Louis XVI; we quoted it in the first part of this work.³

So morals are rotting.

Beliefs are no more respected than morals. Luther and Calvin had torn up the symbol and mocked the Church; Voltaire and Rousseau have come, in their turn, to tear up the Gospel and mock Jesus Christ.

Diderot, d'Holbach, Helvétius, Lamettrie, deny the immortality of the soul and mock the future life. The salons of French society applauded their arguments.

Nothing in the intellectual, moral or religious order was respected.

But it's not just morals and beliefs that are being trampled underfoot, it's the very constitution of kingdoms and society that is being shaken. A spirit of universal revolt was stirring old Europe. France, hitherto so enamored of authority, is preparing to surpass the religious revolts of Germany and England by putting itself at the head of all revolts through the Revolution, whose name is already being uttered in secret.

Never has there been so much talk of sensitivity and benevolence, and never have hearts been harder: an immense egoism dries them up.

Never have people been more gracious, more lovable, more curmudgeonly. And since it's only a short step from contempt to hatred, we took it at the end of the eighteenth century. A hitherto unknown, universal, fierce hatred filled souls. The day is not far off when this hatred, no longer able to contain itself, will erupt. It will be the scaffold, the guillotine!

Poor society, so Christian for so long! Poor nations! O Catholic Church, their mother, how we pity you!

But what seemed to us the final trait, or rather the framework, of all this lamentable decadence, and also the seal of ingratitude, was society's return to paganism: a return positively willed, reflected upon, sung about, proclaimed as law. In fact, in the last years of the Ancien Régime, society was thirsty for paganism against the Gospel. It was resurrected everywhere. Balls, parties, hunts and feasts are full of memories of mythology. Prostitution seeks its excuse and its models in the customs of Athens and ancient Rome. Diana, Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, revive and inspire literature and mores; Brutus will inspire the Revolution. A serious author has rightly said: "Retrogradation began in Europe with the restoration of literary paganism, which successively led to the restorations of philosophical paganism, religious paganism and political paganism. "1 This is the genealogy of the Revolution.

But this return to paganism was, on the part of the society born of Christianity, the bloodiest insult, the most poignant outrage against Jesus Christ. The Nations had been called from paganism to the Gospel. In the eighteenth century, a spirit of vertigo positively recalls and demands paganism against the Gospel.

Ancient paganism was even outdated. For paganism, at heart, was by no means impious:2 whereas in this eighteenth-century society in delirium of apostasy, impiety is made a game of.

Once again, poor society, poor Nations! Who would dare to claim that God was not jealous at this time of almost universal ingratitude, and that in the counsels of his divine jealousy the recall of the Jewish people was not decided and prepared?... What is quite certain is that the Spirit, "who blows where he wills",1 at that very time gave Israel an unusual impetus. Serious, clear-sighted minds, as well as pious souls, thought of Jacob's imperishable remains as a mysterious resource, as help in store for the Church of God. Authentic documents attest to this, as interesting as they are moving. Let's take a look at them.

CHAPTER II

The Question of Jewish Conversion Preoccupied the Xvii* and Xviii' Centuries

I

The most eminent minds of the time, struck by the lamentable state of Christian society, thought of the remnants of Israel as God's reserve for his Church. Reflections by Bossuet and Fénelon. Exaggerations by the scholar Duguet in his overviews of the Jewish people; how they can be explained. Jansenist document: a conversation between Bossuet and Duguet.

First of all, Bossuet and Fénelon are horrified by this state of apostasy, which was already well-defined by the time they lived, and they let painful forebodings escape from their lips or pens: what if God were to cut off certain corrupt nations?...

"Listen, listen, Christian; read your destiny in that of the Jews, but read and listen in the heart... Can we not be frightened by the vengeance that will be unleashed so terribly on the Jews, since Saint Paul warns us, on God's behalf, that our ingratitude will bring us a similar punishment?" Bossuet's cry of alarm.¹

Fénelon in turn exclaims: "If God, terrible in his counsels on the children of men, has not spared even the natural branches of the frank olive tree, how can we hope that he will spare us, wild and stubborn branches, we dead branches incapable of bearing fruit?... What would faith do any longer among peoples corrupted to the roots? Cowards and unworthy Christians, by you Christianity is debased and misunderstood; by you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles... Sin abounds, charity grows cold, darkness thickens, the mystery of iniquity takes shape... The torch of the Gospel, which is to go round the universe, completes its course; the day of ruin is near, and the times are hastening to come. "²

Both, in the midst of their sadness and alarm, glimpsed help for the Church of God: they hoped for it from the conversion of Israel. O God," exclaimed Bossuet, "incredulity reigns on earth: people are

no longer wicked because of weakness, they are wicked by design, by principles, by maxims. Come, Elijah, come, preacher of the Gospel, with heavenly fervor, stir and shake hearts and excite the spirit of penitence. "3

Again, speaking of the remnants of Israel, this great man said: "The Lord will turn to them; he will blot out their sins, and restore to them the understanding of the prophecies which they had lost for a long time, to pass successively and from hand to hand in all their posterity, and not to be forgotten any more until the end of the world, and as long as it pleases God to make it last after this memorable event Thus (concludes Bossuet) the Jews will return one day and they will return to never go astray again. "1

But of all the great intellects of the seventeenth century, none was more complacent about the role of the Jewish people as God's reserve than the learned Duguet. A contemporary of Bossuet, Duguet joined the Oratorians in 1667, but was forced to leave in 1686 because of his attachment to the opinions of Jansenius. He was a man of inexhaustible learning. Saint-Simon, in his *Mémoires*, speaks of the discussions he had with him at La Trappe abbey. "For M. Duguet1, I was charmed. "We walked every day in the abbey garden; devotional subjects, in which he excelled, were not the only ones we talked about; a flower, a plant, the first thing that came along, arts, crafts, fabrics, everything provided him with something to say and instruct; but so naturally, so easily, so fluently, and with such eloquent simplicity and such exact terms, that one was equally taken with the graces of his conversation, and at the same time appalled by the extent of his knowledge, which made him explain all these things as could have been done by the most consummate botanists, druggists, craftsmen and merchants in all these trades. "

Father La Chaise, for his part, said to the President of Ménars, who asked permission to have Abbé Duguet in his home: "All you have to do is turn on the tap, and you'll see flowing such essence as you like."

Why should this vast mind, so deeply versed in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and so enamored of the remnants of God's ancient people, have been led astray by Jansenism? A strange and

truly inconceivable contradiction! On the one hand, Duguet is the herald of love and trust, showing the doors of the Church wide open to welcome the remnants of Israel; and, on the other, he narrows them for Christians, by upholding the dark doctrine of Jansenius. As Pascal said, man is a chaos unto himself, a subject of contradictions.

But Jansenism was not Duguet's only error. His many works of biblical exegesis, which are remarkable for bringing out the harmony of the two Testaments in a striking way, nevertheless contain in many places unfortunate exaggerations, an abuse of the Bible's figures, known in theology as figurism.

What is figurism?

It is a system according to which everything that happened to the Jews under the Old Law, everything without exception, would have been a figure of the things of the New Law, not only their ceremonies and the main episodes of their history, but even their slightest actions: so that the Old Testament, in its entirety and in its final details, would have formed like a vast allegory or prophecy of the New Testament. This system is obviously outré and leads to very serious drawbacks in the explanation of Scripture.¹

Duguet's figurism consisted particularly in finding figurative announcements of the conversion of the Jewish people in numerous scenes and prophecies of the Old Testament, and in applying to this conversion biblical passages which, in theology, are usually applied only to the Church. Wanting to elevate his views to the level of principles, Duguet had composed a little book entitled: *Règles pour l'intelligence des saintes Écritures*, which was read avidly. A converted rabbi was one of the first to point out its danger. A Sorbonne professor, doctor of theology and censor of books, no doubt misled by the generous aspects of this book, had sent its author his approval, with these flattering lines: Such a book is a golden key, and the most beautiful present one could make to the Church.² The converted Israelite replied: "A present to the Church? A golden key? Has it been properly examined? In the moment, we would have realized that this beautiful key is at most of coarse lead; that it bends on any side, and that consequently it is much too weak to open the doors of Scripture. One would be convinced that, far

from being the most beautiful gift one could give to the Church, this book attacks it.” And then, in a skilful and vigorous rebuttal, the athlete of Israel puts down Duguet’s system, ending with these words: “By perverting Scripture in this way, Judaism re-establishes itself in its own right, Mohammedanism is authorized, and even the Pagan cannot be disarmed. “1

We wondered how an exegete as distinguished as Duguet, with his knowledge of Hebrew, the Church Fathers and the teachings of Catholic Tradition, could have allowed himself to be drawn into such exaggeration and such excessive affection for the Jewish people. The cause seems to us to have been a spirit of discontent that he may not have realized was a consequence of his Jansenism. Every Jansenist was a spirit of discontent. Having allowed himself to judge and criticize God’s holy Church, Duguet fell into excess in dealing with the Jewish people: he made them a necessary repairer of the Church, instead of a repentant prodigal son.

This spirit of discontent, speciously introduced under the guise of a great interest in the remnants of Israel, can be glimpsed in a curious Jansenist document, virtually unknown today, a conversation, in the form of a conference, that Bossuet and Duguet are said to have had together on the evils of Christian society and on the only remedy they saw as possible and effective.

“M. Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, and M. Duguet enjoyed talking about religion. The Church of France, at the beginning of the century, had few Doctors comparable to these two excellent theologians; and they were both far removed from the superstitious piety of those who believe they honor the Church by concealing the abuses and scandals that disfigure it. Most of their learned discussions focused on the evils of the Church, on the horrible obscuration of doctrine, morals and discipline. After many reflections on both sides, in which they shared their thoughts and sorrows on what affected them most, M. Bossuet was led to recognize that not only had the evils of the Church sunk deep roots, but that they seemed without remedy in the present state of things.

Would you believe, Monseigneur,” continued M. Duguet, “that the Church could subsist like this for so long, or that the consum-

mation of the centuries was so imminent?

“M. de Meaux agreed that the Last Judgment must still be a long way off, as there were still many things to be accomplished, all the nations of the world having been promised to Jesus Christ. And this, he added, is what increases the difficulty: for some centuries now, the Church has borne the reproach of a kind of sterility: “far from giving birth to new peoples for Jesus Christ, her own children are being snatched away from her every day by heresy and schism; and what’s more, the work of preachers of the Gospel in foreign lands hardly seems blessed by God.

“M. Duguet, having applauded the solidity of these reflections, said in his turn: that he saw only one way out of such a great embarrassment, which was to question Scripture and Tradition, to find out whether the Church had not received the promise of renewal; that it seemed to him that the decadence of faith and charity among the Gentiles had been predicted; but that to this prediction was added the promise of a great mercy which would be the wealth of the whole world. He then asked M. Bossuet to recall what he knew so well about Elijah’s mission and the conversion of the Jewish people, and immediately developed the connection between these two events and what had preceded and would follow them.

“The learned Prelate, who had listened to him with the most profound attention, remained silent for some time; and, emerging as if from a kind of rapture, he bore witness to all his surprise and joy: his surprise at the fact that people were commonly so indifferent or so distracted with regard to what so closely concerns the Church, our holy Mother; his joy at the goodness of the Lord who had prepared for his children such a great consolation in their distresses, and an object so worthy of their vows and desires.

“These two respectable men parted, convinced that the greater and more irremediable the evils, the more we were approaching the time of the greatest mercies “1.

We don’t share the rapture that the Jansenist document lends to the bishop of Meaux. The “horrible obscuration of doctrine, morals and discipline” within the Church, “the opprobrium of a kind of sterility” that hangs over it: such expressions, which the faith and

genius of Bossuet would never have tolerated, are Jansenist inventions. Doesn't the Catholic Church remain the shining city of light raised on the mountain? If people baptized by her return to darkness, won't others come to take their place? And so the Church remains holy and catholic.

This document is valuable only because, at a time of declining faith and depraved morals, it shows the concerns of superior minds, their alarms and their hopes.

II

The xviii century controversies over the conversion of the Jews. Two schools of thought: one that sees the conversion as coinciding with the end of the world, the other that places it well before.

Alongside the eagles, a host of educated but more humble minds, and compassionate hearts, deal with the same question. Dissertations, books, are published; priests and laymen alike hold the pen. There are two schools. One, led by the learned but Jansenist Duguet, exalts the future role of the Jewish people, seeking to prove, with the help of Scripture, that long centuries will still elapse after their entry into the Church; the other school reduces the role of converted Israel to more modest proportions, establishing that its conversion will almost coincide with the end of time.¹ The interest that some people take in these novelties goes so far, that it results in serious disadvantages not only for their faith, but for their health. Indeed, the famous historical phenomenon of convulsions, thought to be purely Jansenist, also had a bearing on the Jewish question. In the middle of France," says an author of the time, "seven or eight hundred convulsionaries announced the imminent return of the Jews and all its circumstances, with a noise and a glare that penetrated not only all parts of the kingdom, but also all peoples who maintained some trade with France. "2 The Church, always a prudent mother, sought to heal the convulsionaries and paid no heed to their predictions.³

On the other hand, hidden souls, penitent in the depths of monasteries, true doves of love, inaugurated immolation for the healing of the Christian nations and the return of Israel. These two great miseries - philosophical incredulity and Judaic blindness - are no longer separate.

We wanted to study closely this movement of minds and hearts so sympathetic to Israel. We have therefore read, analyzed and compared the various works dealing with it at the time. We will not report any of their insights into the famous dispute as to whether or not the conversion of the Jews will be distant from the end of the world and the Last Judgment. For our part, we do not accept the view that there will be a long period of time after this great

event. The fact that Jansenism has led this campaign is enough to make us wary of a sentiment that is not generally held by Catholic Tradition. We thought it would be more useful for the reader to hear what writers on both sides of the debate had to say about the secondary causes that could contribute to the conversion of the Jewish people: there is a philosophy of history here, inspired by the Bible and events. We summarize their insights and common features in the following observations:

III

Unanimity of both schools on the events that seem to prepare this conversion. Summary of their insights and observations. Touching aspirations of pious souls for the conversion of the remnants of Israel and for the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile.

First observation. - All these works are no longer composed, like those of previous centuries, to be a demonstration of Christian truth in the eyes of the Jews; they are composed as a preface to their return. The discussion or argumentation with these blind men is over, exhausted. As we pointed out earlier, the cause has been wearily referred to mercy, the only thing capable of overcoming their hardness. But we expect its intervention, we anticipate its victory, we would like to guess the paths it will take. That's why the works that are published bear titles like these: Dissertation on the Recall of the Jews¹ ; the Future Recall of the Jews;² Note on the Return of the Jews;³ Dissertation on the Return of the Jews to the Church and on what should give rise to it;⁴ Essay on the explanation of the time assigned to the conversion of the Jews;¹ Letter in which it is proved that the return of the Jews is near;² Dissertation on the time of the Recall of the Jews and on the happy revolution it should bring about in the Church,³ etc., etc.

Second observation. - All these works foresee as a sign and also as a cause of the recall of the Jews the blasphemy professed against God and his Christ in the midst of the Nations. The Gentiles or Nations were called back because of the blindness and ingratitude of the Jews. The Jews will be called back because of the apostasy and ingratitude encouraged among the Nations.

And all these works say: "We're touching it, we're there!"

Some, very gloomy because they are Jansenists, go so far as to say: If anything should astonish us, it is that divine mercy has not yet restored Israel.⁴

In the centuries prior to the eighteenth century, exegetes had commented little on a very important but severe passage from Saint Paul: the end of the famous ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where the Apostle dreads, in terms veiled by charity, the

defection or apostasy of which the Gentiles called to the Christian faith could be guilty, and their possible cutting off from the free olive tree.³ Until then, commentators had given very little explanation of this terrible cutting off, and this was wise: firstly, because they were writing in times of fidelity to Jesus Christ; and secondly, because there was no need to sadden. But in the eighteenth century, remarkably, it's this chapter that's brought to the fore, to the forefront, in terrible relief. Writers on both sides were unanimous in their gloomy comments. The frank olive tree, that is, Jesus Christ, is shown by them to be blasphemed, scorned. The wild branches, i.e. the Gentiles, are shown shaken by a horrible storm, by whirlwinds of revolution; to the writers' ears, the cracking of the branches is already heard, the retrenchment begins. At the bottom of the tree, the natural branches, i.e. the remnants of Israel, appear to them to be shaking, to climb back up to the olive tree and resume their place!...¹

Third Observation. - All these works are unanimous in calling the time when the conversion of the Jewish people will take place, the great tribulation of the Church. The Church will be humiliated, vilified, persecuted, reputed for nothing. Some of these authors had truly astonishing predictions. One of them, writing in the year 1057, foretold the civil death of the Church.¹ Having lost her rights through violence, she would be as good as dead.

Many failed to distinguish sufficiently between the failure of certain Christian nations and the indefectibility of the Church. Although unfortunate, the Church will remain indefectible, while societies and nations may fail. God, in His wisdom and omnipotence, will bring out this wonder and contrast.

One of the rewards and consolations of the Church, for having shown herself so divinely heroic in this great tribulation, will be precisely the conversion or rebirth of the people of Israel.

And so many of these authors apply these two touching stories from the Bible to the Church:

One, the story of Job, who after his trial receives, at the end, seven times as many blessings as at the beginning: in the same way, the Church will be consoled, at the end of the centuries, for her great trials by the joy of seeing the remnants of Israel return to her

bosom;²

The other, the story of Rachel, who gives birth in mortal pain to the most beloved of Jacob's sons, Benjamin; he is called first Benoni, or the son of sorrow, then Benjamin, or the son of the right hand. Likewise, the Church will give birth in mortal pain to its last child, the Jewish people, who, converted, will be tenderly loved.¹

Fourth Observation. – These works endeavor to show the consolations which, on the occasion of Israel's return, will flood not only the Catholic Church, but all the nations of the earth. They take pleasure in commenting on joyful prophecies of the Bible that seem not yet to have received their full fulfillment. Above all, they like to base this consoling epoch on the following words of St. Paul, which form a counterweight to the stern warning of the possibility of retrenchment: if the diminution of the Jews (their small number) has been the wealth of the Gentiles, how much more will their fullness enrich the world. Which is to say: if at the beginning of Christianity twelve faithful Jews, the twelve apostles – a poor little remnant, a much diminished number – were nonetheless sufficient to produce such a marvellous change among the Nations to the point of having been their wealth, what then will be, and what can we not expect to be, rich, marvellous, when all Israel as a body converts and takes the cause of Truth into its own hands?

Fifth Observation. – Many of these works take it upon themselves to prepare, with wise counsel, the acceptance of the Jewish people into the ranks of the Christian people. This concern has touched us deeply.

For example: that when Israel returns, there will be no more animadversion on the part of fierce Christians. In the naive French of 1645, an author paints a delightful picture of the feelings of mercy that we should have. He depicts an indignant Christian who is opposed to accepting even repentant Jews, and appeases him by reasoning as follows:

"Please reflect, my Gentile brother, on Joseph's procedure, and think carefully about what this good patriarch said when he made himself known to his brothers. He did not reproach them for their malice or envy, or for having sold him to the Ishmaelites. God," he

told them, "has sent me before you to Egypt, to give you something to live on in this time of famine and famine. Consider that Jesus Christ will one day be recognized by the Jews as Joseph was by the Israelites, and that Jesus Christ will be no less merciful to the Jews than Joseph was to the Israelites. Come closer, my brothers," Jesus Christ will say to the Jews. You thought badly of me, and God has turned that evil into good. It was for my honor and your salvation that your fathers crucified me. The Son of Man had to suffer much to be exalted much. I could not enter into my glory except by my death. And I died only to come before you into heaven, and to prepare for you a place in my glory, which is your salvation and eternal life.

Imagine, my brother, that an Egyptian man attending the recognition of Joseph and his brothers, had insulted the Israelites in this way: "You wicked men! you have made an attempt on the life of your brother, you have sold him to the Ishmaelites, you have upset your father's old age, by telling him that his son, your brother, was dead. You will die for this, you wicked men, and I will be your executioner. Wouldn't the Israelite brothers have been right to say to this Egyptian man: "Friend, what are you worried about? Your zeal is beyond reason. If we hadn't sold our brother, black brother wouldn't have come to Egypt. And if my brother hadn't come to Egypt, I wouldn't have had anything to eat. Our brother, against whom we have sinned, forgives us. And the law, to whom it was favorable and advantageous that we sinned against our brother, wants us to die!

"Consider, Christian, that you are that Egyptian man who makes the same insult about the Israelites; and that the Israelites can answer the same thing. Your zeal, O Christian! is a thoughtless zeal. If our fathers had not crucified Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ would not have died for the law. And if Jesus Christ had not died for the law, you would have died in sins, and would have died an eternal death. Jesus Christ, against whom our fathers sinned, forgave them that sin. And law, to whom it was salutary that our fathers sinned, you want to mistreat us!... "1

So, no more animadversion, no more reminiscing about the past,

when the Jews return to the faith.

Sixth observation. – These various works contain touching prayers for the conversion of Israel. A fine collection could be made of them. We will quote only two, but they sum up admirably the present state of death of the Jewish people, their future rebirth in the great tribulation of the Church, and the resources that the Church and the whole world will find in this rebirth.

“We know, O God, that the remnants of Israel will be saved. But when will this prodigy happen? O desirable time, in which Israel will recognize its God, will be penetrated with respect and a religious trembling in the presence of David its king, and when the two peoples, the Jew and the Gentile, will have only one leader, will form only one body, will be seated at the same table! When, O my Saviour, will this marvel be accomplished? Isn’t eighteen hundred years of blindness, misery and abandonment enough? Enter the sheath, avenging sword of God’s wrath; pity so many generations who disappear without having opened their eyes to the light, nor received the effect of the promises! O you, who reign in Egypt, and whom your brothers have counted as dead for so many centuries, dispel their darkness at last, triumph over their impenitence; no longer do violence to your tenderness, let your love burst forth at last, and your tears flow freely. Let this consoling word resound in their hearts, this word so long awaited, so ardently desired: I am Joseph; come to me, I am your brother.

“We no longer know how to praise or love you, O my God; a dreadful silence reigns on all sides among the Gentiles. Our mouths are mute and our hearts dead. Come out of your tombs, children of Judah; come and teach the whole world to praise and love the Lord, as he deserves to be praised and loved; to confess the unworthiness, the powerlessness, the corruption of the creature, the infinite need he has of the Liberator, the sovereign independence and invincible power of his grace. “1

Second prayer:

“Divine Savior, who wept over Jerusalem, may your tears and those of your servants, moved with compassion for this desolate land, cease to find in it ungrateful and barren dust; may they penetrate

to the heart of its people, or rather remove from this people their unbelieving heart, their heart of stone, and put within them a new spirit. Come yourself, come, O Jesus Christ, awaken from the sleep of death this Lazarus, your ancient friend, whose fate should move all those who love your Church, since, if he is for you a brother according to the flesh, he is also ours according to the promise, Be moved, Be moved, good Savior, over this deplorable corpse, buried and fetid for centuries, but which still carries on it, with the veil that covers its face, the liters of its fathers, the deposit of the sacred books, tokens of your first bounties and of its future reconciliation. Let them hear you from the depths of their tombs, and at the voice of the Son of God let all peoples witness the greatest miracle of resurrection that has appeared since the beginning of the world.

"These, O Jesus, are the wishes expressed to you by the continual sighs of the Church, your bride, now a mother of sorrows, and the cries raised at the foot of the throne of your mercy by the weak and small remnant of true Christians, who, having come to the flax from the time of the nations, have no other support than your divine promises "1.

We have confined our observations to all these works, published from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, in an attempt to separate the true from the false, in the manner of that mountain of magnet of which the Fable speaks, which attracted to itself the iron of vessels and let everything else sink. These observations, to which we have confined ourselves, complete our understanding of the Christian breath that reached the reign of Louis XVI in its ever-widening orbs: a breath of benevolence, of rapprochement between the two peoples, especially if there are to be, in their final history, visits of misfortune and days of trial.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH'S PRUDENCE

I

Notwithstanding all the aspirations and thoughtfulness of the Christian breath in favor of the poor Jews, the Church, as a mother concerned about the future of Christian states, retracted nothing from her ancient precautionary measures.

Faced with this interest, justified or exaggerated, in the remnants of Israel, with these hopes, some very Catholic, others Jansenist; faced, too, with this appeasement that has arisen in the populations as a result of the spirit of maturity to which the human race has reached: what does the Church think? How does it behave?

The Church is very cautious.

Is it retracting any of its precautions against the Jews? Is it changing its ancient rules?

Not in the least, and rightly so.

The spirit of wisdom makes her abandon nothing that the Sovereign Pontiffs or the Holy Councils have decreed to prevent the danger of invasion. All that we have recounted of her thoughtfulness and acts of mercy remain, as do her demarcation measures. In the eighteenth century, as in the twentieth, she would no more admit that a Jew could come into possession of, or share in, what was an essential function in Christian society; that a Jew, for example, could hold school for Christians, sit on a magistrate's seat beneath a crucifix, contribute to the making of the laws of a Christian state. His line of conduct is always the same: tolerate them, treat them well, have compassion on them, but on condition that they remain among themselves, in their own homes, and are not introduced into Christian society, because once in its bosom they would go vile to its heart and upset its normal functions. His *non possumus* is as energetic as ever.

But then, if that's the case, isn't the complex and difficult question that arose in the 18th century: can the Jews be emancipated?

But then again, don't these successive, majestic developments of the Christian breath of goodness, gentleness and mercy, whose magnificent orbs we've enjoyed following through eighteen centuries, end up in mirage-like avenues and doors that are always closed to Israel? In the final analysis, what improvement is there between the situation of the Jews in the eighteenth century and their situation, for example, in the thirteenth? Isn't it always the same stationary compassion on the part of the Church?

Not quite.

First of all, while the Church cannot compromise on her non possumus regarding their introduction into Christian society, she is happy that, thanks to her lessons and advice, governments and populations have renounced the vexations, harshness and violence of which the poor Jews were so often the victims, before her eyes and to her detriment.

She is happy that there is a cautious but honorable exchange of services with them.

She's happy, too, that help is being given, with broad sentiments, to the return of the misguided people, and that fervent souls are already thinking about their future conversion, and preparing for it with their supplications and sacrifices.

It would be fortunate, finally, if this idea of the Israelites' entry into society were accompanied by their entry into the Church, that one did not take place without the other, and that the means of achieving them simultaneously were studied by trial and error, as it were, of light and love.

In the eighteenth century, these were the results obtained, even for the Jews, by the breath of gentleness and goodness that came from the Gospel.

The Church, as austere guardian, never takes her eyes off the avenues of Christian society, her patient work of so many centuries. A vigilant sentinel who received her watchwords from both Testaments, she keeps the Hebrews at bay, not allowing them to be harmed or violated. Drawing inspiration from the Sacred Song of which she has become heir, she ensures that the palisades remain in good condition:

They have put me in charge of the vines.

Take from us the little foxes that ravage the vines: for our vine has blossomed.¹

The blossoming vine is Christian society; the Church sees to it that it is not destroyed.

II

Her prudence is even more attentive for another reason: the mature Nations have become complacent and arrogant, and the Church fears for them that they will resolve the question of Jewish emancipation in a purely civil manner.

Her prudence is becoming even more attentive for another reason: the Catholic nations, hitherto so trusting, are beginning to turn away from their mother, a danger from which the Jews can profit.

To what do we attribute these worrying tendencies of the Catholic Nations? Partly to the example set by the Protestant nations, but partly also to their own complacency, which stems from their maturity. It is clear that, by the 18th century, the nations of Europe had passed the age of ardor and entered a phase of maturity. From the point of view of the things of the time, they have reason to be satisfied, for they present incomparable magnificence. This is the time when Europe is at the peak of its intelligence and strength. The language spoken is that of Bossuet, Pascal, Leibnitz and Corneille. The entire globe has been discovered. All countries have heard the good news of the Gospel and seen the missionaries of peace and the kingdom of God that Europe has sent them. The secret of nature's forces was unraveled by the discovery of steam and electricity: mankind was to derive wonders from them. At last, the era of great social wealth seemed to be upon us, with greater freedom for everyone, more evenly distributed equality and universal brotherhood. The group of European peoples is truly coming into possession of all its genius, all its wealth, all its freedom: it can apply to itself what the great Corneille has Augustus say in the tragedy of China:

I am master of myself, as of the universe.

Ah! if at this point in their history the Catholic Nations, far from diminishing their deference to their holy mother Church, had had the good sense to hold fast to it and increase it, no one would know the torrents of grace and felicity that would have flowed through them to the rest of the human race: for God only asks for faithful channels! Alas! why should the opposite have happened, and why, full of complacency because of their mature age, should they have

ceased their childlike relationship with the holy Church!

At every age, we are children before the Church: peoples and individuals alike. At every age, we must consult her, listen to her and lower our eyes before the Sovereign Pontiffs and Bishops who are the mouth of the Church. It's good to do it, but bad to stop. Is it not for gray hairs as well as for young age, for mature peoples as well as for new ones that the Church, sung by Isaiah, utters these touching words in the writings of this Prophet: Listen to me, you whom I carry in my bosom, whom I enclose in my bowels: I will still carry you to old age, I will carry you to gray hairs; I created you, I will sustain you; I will carry you and I will save you.¹

But no! as soon as they reach maturity, the Nations no longer believe the Church, and believe themselves, and their self-righteousness gives rise to their arrogance. They show themselves jealous and defiant in the possession of the civil domain and in the exercise of the new rights they pompously attach to their age of virility. The language and pretensions of Princes and Parliaments bore the imprint of this haughtiness. In the Church's conduct, then, alongside firmness of principle, tact, circumspection, long-suffering and magnanimity in procedures and arrangements shine forth – the sweet flowering of her virtue of prudence! It remains, while it is scorned; it flows in patience, while it is deceived; it grants, but groans. For the Apostle to the Gentiles spoke these grave words for peoples as well as individuals: Obey your leaders and be subject to them, so that, watching over the good of your souls, they may discharge this duty with joy, and not with groaning, which would not be advantageous to you.¹ So the Church is groaning at this time, and this is far from being advantageous to the Nations.

So here is a dreadful disadvantage brewing, and alarming the Church. Let us hope that this complacency does not show itself, if the question of Jewish emancipation arises! May the Nations not take it into their heads to resolve it on their own, and in a purely civil manner! What dangers there would be for them! And what a delicate situation, full of groans, for the Church!

Dangers, because the Nations are not capable of solving, on their own, as they should, this big question, one of the biggest in the

history of the centuries;

And if, unfortunately, they do resolve it, what a delicate situation for the Church, and what an appeal to all her prudence! But if the solution to the question is to be purely civil, won't the Councils of the future avoid talking about it? In the past, Popes advised sovereigns on how to treat Jews, protect them or stop their audacity; will they not refrain from advising?

That would be silence on the part of the Church, and silence on the part of the Church, like silence on the part of God, is death. Lord, never keep silent about me, lest if you do, I become like those who go down to the pit.¹

O critical moment! Holy Church of God, mother of the Christian Nations, your Nations are turning away from you, but you, do not leave them!

III

Finally, his prudence shines through in the controversy over the future conversion of the Jewish people. An admirable example of this prudence can be seen in the *Assemblée du clergé de France* in 1785.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there was yet another aspect of the Church's prudence. In the previous chapter, we recounted the controversies that arose over the conversion of the Jews, and the assumptions that were made about the circumstances that would precede or accompany this conversion:

The Church has maintained the utmost reserve.

It has been rightly said of the Sovereign Pontiffs' conduct with regard to the course of events: "Placed in front of two worlds, the spiritual world and the material world, eternity's own workers, the Pontiffs knew that they had no direct action on time, except sooner or later, by a combination of springs of which God alone has the secret, transient things must serve the triumph of permanent things, and, despite their stubborn resistance, throw themselves at last, throbbing and defeated, into the arms of truth" The Holy See has already seen several of these solemn moments when time and eternity meet; but it is unaware of the epochs, and it is also unaware of the roads which, in the indeterminate sphere of the possible, bring the finite and the infinite together. This is why the Holy See neither calls for nor creates events; it receives them from the hand of God, who produces or permits them, confining itself, when they are accomplished, to behaving towards them with the ordinary rules of Christian wisdom. "1 This prudence, which has never been denied, is divine. Prudence is the queenly virtue; it makes men powerful," says Bossuet. The Holy See has always been powerful because of this wisdom with regard to events, this patience with time.

So, all the controversies that have arisen over the general conversion of the Jews, all the explanations of the future, have found the Holy See and the Church reserved. This reserve is not indifference. For, with one hand, the Holy Church holds the divine Scriptures which announce this conversion; and, with the other, she is preparing to bless the ancient people of God whom she awaits and

for whom she prays. But that's all. The rest is God's secret. The roads by which they will return, and the time of that return, she doesn't know. And whenever she has been presented with glimpses that even authorize the divine Scriptures, the Church has remained on the utmost reserve, revering the seven mysterious seals that the lion of the tribe of Judah, alone, lifts,¹ and showing that she awaits, for all that is written in the Bible about the consummation of the centuries, the sure commentary of events.²

At the end of the eighteenth century, there was a significant feature of this prudence. A small detail now ignored, it seemed to us to be the expression of the Church's grave reserve, either with regard to the events of the consummation of the centuries, or with regard to Israel and the Nations at the hour of this consummation.

Mgr de Noé, bishop of Lescar, was due to deliver a carefully prepared speech to the *Assemblée du Clergé de France* in 1785, at a time when the Jewish question was already preoccupying public opinion.³ The speech was never delivered. One of the few copies in our possession bears this warning at the head: "This speech, although composed for the *Assemblée du Clergé* in 1785, was not delivered for reasons that need not be repeated. "4 We have read it in full. It contains great beauties and grave warnings, presented in a striking manner, with the lofty vision of a prophet. Consider the following extract. It was in 1785 that the noble bishop took up his pen, and, foreseeing the terrible events that were about to unfold, he said: "I compared the crimes of ancient peoples with our own, and, seeing the sky on fire in the evening, I told myself that the following day would be scorching. I collected myself within myself; I hardened my forehead like marble, to withstand the shock of the contradictors; I shouted like an attentive sentinel who has seen the enemy advance; I will raise my voice like a trumpet, to announce to the people the day of wrath, and to the hefs of the people the approaches of calamity. "1

The speech was never delivered. The *Assemblée du clergé de France* sc passed it from hand to hand, admiring it, but not granting it the authority and resonance of *La chaire chrétienne*. For reasons that need not be repeated," says the disclaimer at the head of the

1788 edition.

Now, curious to find these reasons in the context itself, we found the first in the dread that such gloomy forebodings would certainly have caused;

But we found two others in the Church's prudence;

Prudence with regard to the events of the consummation of the centuries: Mgr de Noé belonged to the school which professed this bold opinion: that an intermediate advent of Jesus Christ, as King of all the earth, will take place, before his final advent for the Last Judgment;

And caution, too, regarding Israel and the Nations. Here we have proof of the Church's tenderness and delicacy towards her beloved Nations, despite the ingratitude of many. Indeed, the speech constantly contrasts these two Scripturally-supported events: the chastisement of the nations and the recall of the Jews; on the one hand, ingratitude; on the other, consolation. Such a contrast, in such an assembly, was going to have an official impact. It was a serious matter. Bossuet, Fénelon and other doctors and preachers had incidentally recalled the threats of retrenchment in a particular writing. But what was still unprecedented was a large Catholic assembly such as that of the clergy of France, giving relief to these threats and associating itself with words such as these: "If my heart rejoices in the expectation of such a great good (the recall of Israel), it immediately falls back into sadness at the sight of the evils that must precede it. It is through a painful crisis that this happy revolution must take place; it is on the debris of the cut-off peoples that the new people must rise. I see trials, battles, a desert of arid sands, and perhaps a sea of blood, a deluge of fire threatening a defiled land, the arm of God raised against guilty Gentiles, I tremble... cl, like the prophet Jonah, at the moment of announcing unfortunate truths to a great people, I am ready to flee... "1

So the assembly spared the noble bishop from fleeing, by fleeing from the speech itself. She reads well. It avoided showing the Church prepared to console itself for the ingratitude of this or that nation with the hope of Israel's return. The Church will never do that. Having loved the Nations, she will love them to the end. If

(God forbid!) many should abandon, despise and make suffer the one who was their mother, the Church will remain mother, protector and guardian. She will never take Israel's side against the Nations. She will not say: "Such peoples forsake me, but Israel returns to me. But if her heart is to be consoled by this long-awaited birth, her arms will always reach out to her beloved Nations, for Gentiles were her firstborn.

SECOND SECTION

THE BREATH OF PHILOSOPHISM IN FAVOR OF THE ISRAELITES

THE BREATH OF A STORM

CHAPTER IV

PLAN FOR A HUMANITARIAN SOCIETY TO REPLACE CHRISTIAN SOCIETY AND EMBRACE ALL MEN

I

To be a good judge of history, one must take into account not only Providence, but Hell itself. In the 18th century, Hell changed its tactics with regard to the remnants of the ancient people of God. In future, the Jews will not only be spared, but glorified. To what end?

Anyone who fails to take account in history not only of Providence, but also of Hell, will never have more than indecisive views, and will provide only incomplete explanations. God and Satan fight over the human heart, as we all know; but they also fight over the direction of society, its developments and its phases. The first page of the Bible reveals this; Christ reminded us that, in the Church, the gates of Hell will not prevail; Saint Paul points this out in the preaching of the Gospel, when he writes to the Thessalonians: We wanted to go to you; and I, Paul, had the intention more than once, but Satan prevented us;¹ and since then, the history of these eighteen centuries visibly reveals, above our quarrels of cities, countries, nations and races, the spectacle of these two giant forces in combat: infernal malice devastating society, and divine grace repairing it, sustaining it and always moving it forward².

In the fifth chapter of Book II, we showed the remnants of Israel in the face of Hell's relentlessness, despite their association with darkness since the deicide. Massacres, popular fury, have often been inspired by the black abyss, to get rid of a people held in reserve by Providence for supreme mercies. But here's a rather singular change of tack:

In the 18th century, Hell changed tactics. The remains of Isra-

el, hitherto ransacked by it, were to be spared, and even glorified. Consideration and respect for the Jew became its program.

And where does this change in tactics come from?

Hell's hatred is clairvoyant, it has its glimmers. Hell has perfectly conjectured, from the unequivocal sign of the radiance of the Cross and the Gospel under every sky and on every beach, that the fullness of the Nations announced by St. Paul is about to be fulfilled, and that consequently Israel's time is at hand¹. So the abyss wanted to take the lead. These inexterminable remnants of Israel, whom he has been unable to defeat by massacre, he will try to pervert, to make them unfit for God's purposes through corruption: in this way, their conversion will be made impossible...

This was clearly his program at the end of the 18th century.

Two great currents of ideas and resources would be its means of execution: the first, Protestant propaganda; the second, the breath of philosophism.

II

First attempt at this tactic by Protestant propaganda; but ineffective Protestantism on the people of the Old Covenant. Why did this happen?

Luther had treated the Jews very badly. In the strangest turn of events, Lutheranism suddenly sets out to convert them. Protestant societies were founded and multiplied, rich and tenacious, to distribute the New Testament, translated into Hebrew, to the sons of Jacob in every corner of the globe: the ships of mighty Albion sailed in the service of this propaganda¹. It's all in vain, as the old hard-headed people, more tenacious than Protestant societies, don't let themselves be swayed. In fact, they remain impervious to Lutheran Bibles. Protestantism handles a corpse and doesn't realize that it has no power to revive it. It's as if a Pharisee of Jesus' time had said: Lazarus, come out of the tomb! The Talmudic bandages will only fall off, and the tomb will only come alive at the voice of Truth!

The Bible also contains an extremely touching parable that explains why the remnants of the people of Israel cannot become Protestants, Mohammedans or followers of any other false religion: the parable of the wife who, punished for adultery, abandons herself to no one. The Lord says in the prophet Hosea: You will wait for me for a long time, but you will not give yourselves up to anyone; you will have no other husband, and I will also wait for you.¹

You will wait for me: this is indeed the great character of the Jews, they wait. Nothing changes this disposition in them, neither the revolutions of empires, nor the diversity of customs of the nations in whose midst they live: they wait!

I myself will wait for you, unbelieving and ungrateful people! I will not tire of preserving you; I will prevent your families from dying out and merging with those of the Nations; I will bear with your obstinacy and hatred against the Messiah and his Church; I will let you keep the letter of the Scriptures and certain remnants of legal practices, without restoring or destroying you entirely.

Indeed, the Jewish people, fixed in this state of expectation, are a prodigy. For on the one hand, they resemble a visibly abandoned

bride; on the other, they abandon themselves to no one. He becomes neither an idolater nor a follower of the various superstitions of the people. A superior hand prevents him from falling into the abyss of irreligion, without introducing him to true religion.

Withdraw your Bibles, Protestants: the bride who awaits is insensitive to your advances and your efforts! How can you expect Israel, which no longer understands the true Bible it holds in its hands as an austere guardian, to understand your falsified, truncated and frozen bibles?

III

An essay made more formidable by the breath of philosophism and philanthropy. Plan of Hell: replace Christian society and dissolve the remnants of Israel by the formation of a new society, neither Christian nor Jewish, but purely humanitarian, embracing all men.

The second means employed by the genius of evil to undermine the remnants of Israel and render them unfit for God's purposes was to be, as we said, the breath of philosophism. Its results would prove far more formidable than those of Protestant propaganda, and even more effective. For the attentive observer, this is Hell's plan:

Disorganize Christian society and Jewish beliefs and mores at the same time, and from this double disorganization bring about a state of affairs in which, religiously speaking, there are no longer any Christians or Jews, but only men who have rid themselves of the Divinity, and in which, politically speaking, the Christian has become, if not the slave, at least the inferior, and the Jew the master: For how could we suppose that the remnants of the Jewish people, corrupted in their faith, intoxicated and as it were lost in power and wealth, could ever serve the cause of Catholicism, which, incidentally, will have all but disappeared.

Such a plan was not only Machiavellian, it was pure Satanism. Hell alone could have authored it and carried it out. At the time of writing, 1885, we can see the very dark horizons and dark outlines of this plan unfolding. But in the 18th century, it was simulated in the nascent orbs of philosophical and philanthropic inspiration. It is therefore important to examine and explore this sinister starting point, this breath of poisoning and storms.

IV

What philosophism was for the success of this plan.

What was philosophism?

A breath of revolt, similar in every way to that inspired by the ancient serpent in Eden.

You shall be like gods, knowing good and evil," was the temptor's breath or suggestion.

But what had the serpent made this promise about?

About the fruit of a tree that, like all other trees, had come from the hands of the Creator. This tree, in itself, was good, very good; this fruit, as the Bible says, was beautiful and pleasing to the eye. How could it have been otherwise? Doesn't everything that comes out of God's hands bear the stamp of his goodness? After creation was complete, didn't He Himself pass the appropriate judgment on it: *Cuncta erant valde bona*,¹ all things were perfectly good! the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, like everything else.²

Disobedience alone made its use pernicious. If God draws good from evil, alas, man draws evil from good!

So it was with an excellent fruit of the Creator, whose use had been reserved, that the temptation took place, and the serpent deceived mankind.

Philosophy, the new breath of the serpent, will proceed in the same way with regard to the fruits of Christ and Christianity.

What are these fruits?

We've already mentioned them: the softening of morals, the freedom to achieve, the dignity and respect of the human person, justice, equality, pity, mercy, charity, in a word this magnificent flowering of duties and rights, virtues and services, the true "fruits of light" "1 that the apostle Saint Paul announced as being the production of Christianity, and which we have shown, in fact, blossoming under the tireless care of the Catholic Church. But, we added, this germination, this fructification, took place gradually, from century to century, as befits the things and institutions of this world, according to the law of progress which is the very law of humanity. Christ, in bringing freedom, gentleness, equality and fraternity, commanded

them to mature, but at the same time as the human race itself was maturing. This is the main idea we have developed, notably in the first chapter of the second book and the first of the third.

Now, when these fruits of Christianity seem to have reached maturity, and the ripe age of the Nations has arrived, it is then that philosophism presents itself and speaks this language to Europe, and through Europe to the rest of the human race: Christianity has long been promising you freedom, equality and fraternity. It never gives them to you, or gives you only the semblance of them. I bring them to you. Eat of my fruit - and that fruit was Christ's and Christianity's own fruit, but poisoned by the serpent's breath - and you'll be like gods, knowing freedom and fraternity at last.

This is how philosophism resembled, in every way, the first breath of revolt to come out of Eden: aptly named philosophism, because it was the revolt of philosophy against Jesus Christ and his Church. Philosophy means love of wisdom. The wisdom of the nations of Europe, having come of age, proudly rebelled, and was struck with vertigo. Their philosophy then becomes philosophism. Philosophy is good; philosophism, detestable.

V

Maxims by means of which men will be detached from the old society, and drawn into the new; first maxim: All religions are good; second maxim: Jews are men like any others.

Since the aim of philosophism is to create a new, universal society, how will it detach men from the old society and draw them into its own? It will do so, above all, with the help of two maxims. They are famous; after a century, their prestige has not diminished.

The first was "All religions are good". Satanic temptation has never taken on a more captious, more perfidious form. Which leads me to say that Philosophy proceeded with far more skill and cunning than Protestantism. Luther, too, had wanted to found a new, universal society, but he succeeded only imperfectly. Protestantism, in fact, got rid of the dogmas and authority of the Church with a bang, by protesting with all the means in its power; philosophism will get rid of them without a bang, without a battle, by disdain. Luther, a fiery, apostate monk, is more reminiscent of Lucifer openly rising up against God; philosophism is more reminiscent of the serpent of Eden, with its suppleness and captious insinuations.

"All religions are good. O men, why do you quarrel over religion, since they are all good? Hold out your hands. Such, then, is the accommodation proposed by philosophism in the 18th century, and its false air of bonhomie astonishes and subjugates. This bonhomie, and the admiration it aroused, gave rise to indifferentism, or indifference in matters of religion.

If philosophism excludes no religion, it is careful not to give preference to any one of them, and after reaching out to all of them, equally to all of them it turns its back. "Settle among yourselves, my dear religions, but without quarrelling, for all that has come to you from an extra-human world; as for me, I am concerned only with humanity!" Thus expressed the liberal and accommodating philosopher, and his feigned indifference was accompanied by a sarcastic laugh.

It's easy to understand how such a system would favor the Jews. A voice - the same voice that was heard in the ear of the woman in Eden, and to Jesus on the pinnacle of the Temple - will say to them:

“Haven’t you heard? All religions are good! But then there’s no reason for anyone to keep you away because of your religion, which is good like all the others, as good as all the others. Take courage then, O Israel! Philosophy is emancipating like Moses; prepare yourself for tomorrow’s new departure from Egypt!”¹

And that’s not all. At the same time as in the religious sphere philosophism established this first maxim: all religions are good, in the social sphere it introduced this second: Jews are men like any others, so are negroes, so are savages. The social maxim was the corollary of the religious maxim. As soon as neither inferiority nor superiority, truth nor falsity, were admitted between religions, it was no longer logical to maintain differences or privileges between the followers of these religions. Philosophy, in theory, took account only of humanity; becoming philanthropy in practice, it took account only of human or natural aptitudes, opening up all the avenues of society to anyone.

Here again, it’s easy to see how the new social morality would favor the Jews. The same voice will say to them: “Since you are men like everyone else, enter the fray. Every career is yours, as it is for anyone else’s. Honors and power are yours too! In a racing contest, the prize goes to the lightest; in the new social order, the palm, and above all the benefits, will go to the most intelligent and the most skilful. Awaken the faculties, O Israel!”

To sum up, what is the goal of philosophism? It’s this: to lead and encourage all men to form a new social order in which all will be equal and free, without any future consideration for Christian dignity. Human dignity, only human dignity, will be the condition for entry into the new society. “Dignity as a man! but to me, as a philosopher, it seems more than enough to have the facility and the right to present oneself in the ranks of the society I want to form. I proclaim that the avenues of this society must be open to anyone, provided he honors his name as a man, without the need to examine what beliefs he holds to some Revelation, or what God he worships. Worthy men, that’s what I want, that’s what I’m looking for. In my eyes, there is no longer any dignity for Christians or unworthiness for Jews. Let us make men of all the debased, all the degraded, and

their place is marked in my society!

We repeat, such a plan could only come out of Hell, so intertwined is compassion with perfidy!

If it succeeds, Christian society will be very close to its ruin: ruined indeed in the spirit of faith to which a liberal or rationalist spirit will have succeeded, and ruined equally by the Jews who will have penetrated its bosom. On the other hand, the remnants of Israel will, in their turn, be compromised: for this liberal spirit will have affected and dissolved them like the others, and the pride of power will complete the dissolution.

Divine Wisdom, whose merciful designs are laid out in Scripture, triumph then, if you can!

CHAPTER V

FORMATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN SOCIETY MAIN ELEMENT OF FORMATION: A MASS OF DEGENERATE CHRISTIANS

I

How purely humanitarian society is formed. Two formative elements: a mass of degenerate Christians, and a small band of advanced Jews.

One wonders with a sort of amazement how and by what influences the design of a purely humanitarian society managed to get into the midst of Christian society, with the aim of taking its place. A reflection, which we have already mentioned, provides the explanation:

Most of the time, human hatred is blind; Satan's is clairvoyant;

The human mind, narrow-minded, does not see all the consequences of such an evil act, of such a dangerous principle that it poses; but the evil Spirit sees them, directs them;

Men have sown the wind; he brings out the storms.

Here, the wind sown is philosophism; let's see the storm grow and organize itself.

The perpetrators of the audacious enterprise of an exclusively humanitarian society, whether consciously or unconsciously obedient to the genius of evil, must be divided into two categories. One is the mass of degenerate Christians; the other is a small band of advanced Jews.

II

The interests of the Catholic people will be betrayed, to the benefit of the Jews, by this mass of degenerate Christians, successively and consequently. Betrayed by Voltairianism and the Encyclopedist sect.

The mass of degenerate Christians are the first culprits of this humanitarian society, where the decadence of the Christian populations and the preponderance of the Jewish race will be simultaneously prepared. The mass: isn't that too strong a word? Alas, no. Within this mass, we're going to find numerous famous schools, almost entire regions.

At the head of this dismal multitude, which has betrayed Christian interests and consequently benefited the Jews, is the Voltairian school.

But isn't this a contradiction in terms, and a historical error? Haven't we presented Voltaire as the bitter enemy of the Jews?

Yes, without doubt, Voltaire was the bitter enemy of the Jews; we'd even add that in his rage he would have exterminated them, if it had been in his power. Nevertheless, Voltairianism was extremely favorable to them. They themselves agree, in implacably truthful terms. "If Voltaire has been fatal to us, Voltairianism has been eminently useful. - More just than their enemy, the Jews accord him the admiration he deserves, in exchange for the contempt they did not deserve. They do not forget that, if Voltaire hated them, his punishment was to be useful to them without knowing it. "2

Voltaire an enemy of the Jews, and Voltairianism a profit for the Jews: what a staggering solution! what a blunder for strong minds, and what a punishment! what a lesson, and to think we didn't understand it! If only the following reflection could serve to enlighten:

Chosen and gifted to go on to the end of the centuries, the Jewish race, which knows its immortality and pursues, undeterred by anything, a dream of preponderance, is patient. It knows how to wait, and makes the most of everything, even its enemies. She's not surprised by outrages: the one who has outraged her passes on; she does not. And if the insulter happens to have been an apostate of Christ and to have had apostate populations as accomplices, divine vengeance allows his harmful work to benefit the Jews. Voltairianism

is a striking example. Voltaire outraged the Jews, but much more than that, he outraged the divine figure of Christ. Punishment: Voltairianism has become profit for the Jews. But how? By weakening, alas! the spirit of faith and the seriousness of ancient morals in populations that have become Voltairian, so that, no longer protected by what made them superior, these spoiled, degenerate populations, in a word Voltairian, will more easily become, in unconscious stages, the prey of the Jews in private affairs, then their prey in public affairs. This is how the Jews have been able to say with implacable truth: If Voltaire has been harmful to us, Voltairianism has been eminently useful to us.

Voltaire was therefore a traitor to Christian populations. But he is not alone, he has a retinue: the Encyclopedists.

The *Encyclopédie* was the 18th century's pitched battle against Catholicism. Alongside Voltaire, d'Âlembert, Diderot, Lalande, Lamettrie, Maupertuis, Condorcet and other no less infamous figures came to battle. As a result, the *Encyclopédie* was "more a fact than a book" ¹ and should be appreciated as much for its political as for its literary value. As a book, the *Encyclopédie* did not live up to its pompous claim to be a universal, scholarly repertory of human knowledge. The Encyclopedists failed to achieve their goal; they did not erect a monument to the creations of the human mind worthy of their wealth and glory. Voltaire himself, their compère and friend, judged their repertoire as follows: *L'Encyclopédie* is a Harlequin suit with a few pieces of good cloth and too many rags. But, as a political fact, the *Encyclopédie* unfortunately achieved its goal; its authors succeeded only too well in propagating their doctrines and making their spirit penetrate society; doctrines and spirit that can be summed up as follows: "There is hardly an article in the *Encyclopédie* that does not preach philosophical doubt, deism, materialism or atheism." ¹ The *Encyclopédie*, as an assembly of deist, materialist and atheist writers, was that demon of which the Gospel speaks: its name is legion.

This sinister gathering, led by Voltaire, cast the shadow of Balthazar's feast over unfortunate Christian society. Indeed, they are famous, those joyous suppers where the philosophical guests, their spirits

heated by wine and hatred, proposed to leave nothing standing in heaven, on earth or in the heart of man. At one of these suppers, at d'Alembert's, Voltaire, looking at the company, said: "Messieurs, I believe that Christ will find himself ill at this session. And d'Alembert admits, in one of his letters, that when he heard their infamous remarks, the hairs on his head stood on end; he took them, he writes, for the counselors of Pilate's Praetorium.

Well, they were listening at the door, the descendants of the Praetorium councilors! They must have said to themselves: Voltairianism is useful to us.

III

Betrayed by Rousseau.

Rousseau (1712-1778) was also a traitor, and his betrayal was all the more dangerous for having concealed it. As he is the true pontiff of the humanitarian religion, it is important to judge him and his work according to the truth.

Writers, sons of the Nations, have judged him loyally; let a son of Israel judge him, following in their footsteps, with the same loyalty. Here, first of all, is their judgment:

A. ON HIS VICES AND MORALS

In his *Confessions*, he himself revealed his vices and even his weaknesses. "I charge Baron de Lederhielm, albeit reluctantly, to bring you a book which has just been published: it is Rousseau's infamous memoirs, entitled *Confessions*. It seems to me that they may be those of a barnyard valet and even below that state, sullen in every way, moody and vicious in the most disgusting manner. I don't come back from the worship I gave him (for he was one); I won't console myself that it cost the life of the illustrious David Hume, who, to please me, took it upon himself to drive this foul animal to England." (Letter from the Comtesse de Boufflers to Gustave III.)

"The former lackey of Mme de Vercellier, M. de Gouvion and M. de Montaigu, the guilty accuser of an innocent servant, the man who paid for a woman's hospitable pity with dishonor, the father who sent all his children to the hospital, the cynical narrator of the *Confessions*, this is really not a venerable legislator: but modern philosophism, like ancient polytheism, does not value its gods." (Poujoulat, *Révolution française*, p. 25.)

B. ON HIS PRIDE

Posing as the moral type of humanity, he tends to systematically justify his saddest errors. "Let the trumpet of the Last Judgment sound when it pleases... Eternal Being, gather around me the innumerable crowd of my fellow men; let them listen to my confessions, let them groan at my iniquities, let them blush at my miseries... and then let one say to you, if he dares, I was better than that man!"¹ (Cantu, *Hist. univ.*, I. XVII, p. 155.)

G. ON HIS FUNDAMENTAL ERROR

Nature has made man happy and good; society depraves him and makes him miserable. So society alone is to blame for everything. According to Rousseau, every man is a primitive Adam, similar to an incorruptible marble statue which, having fallen into a swamp, has long since disappeared under a crust of mold and silt, but which, freed from its feculent sheath, can rise again on its pedestal with all the perfection of its form and all the purity of its whiteness. (Taine, *l'Ancien Régime*, p. 291.)

"Rousseau is exquisite, when he begins his Social Contract with this resounding maxim: Man is born free, and by everything he is in irons. The opposite of this insane assertion, *l'homme est né libre*, is the truth... Christianity has delivered him." (De Maistre, *du Pape*, p. 295-99.)

D. -ON HIS PERFIDIOUS WAY OF PROCEEDING
IN DIALECTICS

He has been compared to the frightened, solitary and venomous spider. "There is no tighter logician. His demonstration is knotted, stitch by stitch, over one, two or three volumes, like an enormous net with no way out, in which, willy-nilly, you get caught. It's a systematics that, turned in on itself and with its eyes stubbornly fixed on its dream or its principle, sinks deeper into it every day, unwinding its consequences one by one, and always holding the entire network in its grasp. Don't touch it. Like a frightened, solitary spider, he has woven it all from his own substance, with the most cherished convictions of his mind, with the most intimate emotions of his heart. At the slightest shock, he shudders, and, in defense, he is terrible, beside himself, venomous, even out of restrained exasperation, out of wounded sensitivity, relentless on the adversary whom he smothers in the tenacious and multiplied threads of his web, but even more formidable to himself than to his enemies, soon entangled in his own net, persuaded that France and the universe feel conjured against him, and strangling in the admirable lakes that by dint of logic and imagination he has built for himself." (Taine, *l'Ancien Régime*, p. 555-4.)

"His writings, like his life, are a perpetual contradiction. In his

books, he paints the picture of a golden age, while his life is a continual blasphemy and curse. Rousseau despises the great and the small, yet he cannot live without their esteem; he recognizes a God, yet he does not trust in Him; he loves virtue, yet he does not believe in it; he idolizes truth, yet he sacrifices himself to lies; his existence is that of a man who distrusts his fellow men and does not hope in the Divinity; he wants to teach reasoning, yet he continually misrepresents and contradicts himself. He asks for our soul, but only to throw it into illusions and errors" (CantU Hist. univ., t. XVII, p. 158-159).

E. - on the PERNICIOUS influence of his writings, PARTICULARLY THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

"Rousseau was as powerful as Voltaire, and we can say that the second half of the century belongs to him. (Taine, *l'Anc. Rég.*, 554.)

"Rousseau makes people shudder where Voltaire only laughs. He made himself the organ of the century's hatreds, ideas and hopes; as a result, he transmitted them like inspirations and with immense effectiveness." (Cantü, t. XVII, p. 159.)

A "novelist of the savage state, by dint of exalting the vigor of the body, the perfection of the senses, and even the virtues of the savage man, he made the savage state fashionable." (De Bonald.)

"Without regard for origins and historical traditions, with absolute confidence in his own infallibility, he shatters the laborious work of centuries, scattering in the air the sacred heritage of peoples, without knowing its price or having anything to put in its place. So Rousseau became the idol of the so-called patriots, the men of the Terror; they transported his remains to the Pantheon and named the Social Contract the beacon of the Revolution." (GoschleR, *Dictionnaire théologique*, t. XX, p. 474-8.)

Such is Jean-Jacques Rousseau, judged by the sons of the Nations. In the features of his physiognomy, is there not the preparation of a traitor? Let a son of Israel, who loves the Nations redeemed by Jesus Christ, also testify against this evil being and give us a glimpse of the final outcome of his treason.

Rousseau is the rarest traitor that has ever been seen, because it was he who, by teaching Christian peoples to strip themselves of

the Christian in order to be content with the human, paved the way for their inferiority and perhaps their enslavement. Here's the simple proof:

In all his writings, and particularly in his *Social Contract*, Rousseau demands that society, in order to put an end once and for all to all the disagreements that are tearing its bosom apart, and also to rehabilitate so many degraded and outcast people, begin its ages anew, taking the idea of man as its basis and starting point. What could be more inoffensive at first sight, and even more generous? There, however, he was preparing the most terrible betrayal. Wasn't this project, in fact, the bloodiest insult to Jesus Christ, who alone had the right to start the centuries anew for mankind, because he was God?

But then, if this point of departure is accepted - it will be by the Revolution, and even the Revolution will come out of it - the Jew will ascend, but the Christian will descend. For the son of Israel, who will go from being an outcast to being a man, there will obviously be an ascent; but for the Christian, who will agree to strip himself of his Christian status in public life to keep only his title of man, there will be decadence, voluntary degradation. It is permissible to humiliate oneself, but never to degrade oneself by abdicating an essential, intrinsic quality. To a discerning eye (Satan's), things won't stop there. The decadence of the Christian will not stop at the level of man, just as the ascension of the Jew will not be limited to being the equal of the Christian... A terrible betrayal is afoot. Rousseau's treacherous *Social Contract* will become for the unfortunate Christian nations what the diverted bed of the Euphrates was for the sleeping people of Babylon. Through the bed of the Euphrates, Cyrus' army passed and Babylon was surprised. Through Rousseau's *Social Contract*, the Hebrews will pass through and take over many things in society.

IV

Betrayed by the frivolous French salons of the xviii⁰ century.

The frivolous French salons of the eighteenth century are equally guilty of betrayal.

"In the eighteenth century, France was a salon. "1 Nothing could be further from the truth.

At first, these salons eagerly echoed Voltaire's sarcastic, libertine laughter. They were prepared for it. "A great mistake is to think that incredulity dates back to Voltaire, Rousseau and the Encyclopedists. Before these men appeared, French society was perverted. While the piety of old King Louis XIV turned too many courtiers into hypocrites, mocking and libertine irreligion had its secret meetings; unbelieving Epicureanism was represented by the Prince de Conti, the Duc de Vendôme and his brother the Grand Prieur, the Duc de Sully, the Marquis de la Fare, and by abbés such as Chaulieu, who forgot the lessons of the Gospel to follow those of Horace, Ovid and Catullus. The greatest names, the positions that should have most respected each other, were rushing into elegant vice and the enchantments of orgy. Didn't Ninon, who saw at her feet the Longuevilles, the Colignys, the d'Albrets, the d'Estrechs, the Clérambaults, the La Châtres, display anti-Christian sentiments? If you knew," says Mmc de Sévigné, "how she dogmatizes religion, it would horrify you.

"The Regent, who believed in nothing but alchemy, and whose name has gone down in history as the most complete expression of immorality, his friends the d'Effiat, the Canillac, the Nocé, the Brancas; Cardinal Dubois, that phenomenon of corruption who sold his soul to the devil and his country to England; all those lords of the Regency who soiled their coats of arms and turned their backs on the glory of their forebears; in short, all the men of sad renown who closed the seventeenth century and opened the eighteenth, had they waited for Voltaire to strip off the garment of the old faith? Alas, no. François Arouel's son had the Abbé de Châtcauneuf, Ninon's last adorateur, as his godfather and guide in his younger years, and as a child Voltaire breathed the air of vice and incredulity "1 So when

the child became a man and his laughter resounded against religion, the French salons were quick to echo it. "Until then, when religion was attacked, it was attacked as a serious thing; the eighteenth century attacked it with laughter. Laughter passed from the philosophers to the people of the court, from the academies to the salons; it reached the steps of the throne; it was seen on the lips of the priest; it took its place in the sanctuary of the domestic hearth, between mother and children. And what were they all laughing about? They were laughing at Jesus Christ and the Gospel! And that was France!... "1

French salons were no less receptive to Rousseau's dogmatism than they were to the sarcastic, libertine laughter of Voltaire and the Encyclopedists.

In the 18th century, every salon in France was dogmatized, and everyone wanted to be a philosopher. "In this permanent feast that brilliant French society gives itself, philosophy is the main play. Without philosophy, ordinary banter would be bland. It is a kind of superior opera, where all the great ideas that can interest a thinking head are paraded and clashed, sometimes in serious costume, sometimes in comic disguise. There's no dinner or supper where she doesn't have a place. You're at table amidst delicate luxury, among smiling, adorned women, with educated, amiable men, in a select society where intelligence is quick and commerce is sure. From the second course onwards, the verve explodes, the jibes burst forth, the spirits flare or sparkle. During dessert, can we resist putting the most serious matters into good words? Around coffee time, the question of the immortality of the soul and the existence of God comes up. "2 Among all the deplorable results of this salon dogmatism, what was kindly called the return to nature contributed more than can be said to the birth and development of humanitarian society. Rousseau and the Encyclopedists advocated this return to nature in doctrine; the French salons took it upon themselves to translate the doctrine into action. "Rousseau preached the charm of the wilderness, and the little masters dreamed of the joys of sleeping naked in the virgin forest "1 - "Saint-Lambert was applauded when, at supper, raising a glass of champagne, he proposed a return to nature and the customs of Otaïti. "2 Understood in a more appropriate form, this return to

nature was no less dangerous: “A small temple to Friendship was built in his park. 3 In this little temple, at the foot of this little altar, where was the Christian? Treason!

This laughter, this licentiousness in all its forms, this entertainment that was at once rebellious and pagan, this squandering, in a word, of Christian doctrines and mores, led to another, where French salons began to find one of their punishments: the squandering of family heritage and ancient Christian economies. The idea of money at the time was this: Saved, piled up, money, instead of being a river, is a useless and smelly pond.⁴ Surely, such a saying must have greatly excited laughter and hope in the Hebrew household: there, isn’t saving strength?... “Big expenses ruined families, forcing them to silence their aristocratic pretensions, to ally themselves with opulent commoners, and throw, as we used to say, bourgeois manure on feudal lands. Louis XIV had once cajoled the Jewish banker Samuel Bernard; the aristocracy took their cue from him without imitating his dignity, and humiliated their quarters in front of a safe. “1

In short, with their skeptical, libertine and rebellious spirit, and their return to nature, the French salons of the eighteenth century prepared, in practical life, the substitution of humanitarian society for Christian society; and through their need for gold for their amusements and follies, they prepared the scepter for Jewish gold.

V

Betrayed by Emperor Joseph II of Austria and Josephism.

This emerging humanitarian society is the sin of Europe. Each nation, it seems, is represented by a sinful character. Luther began European sin in the name of Germany. Voltaire introduced France, aided by French salons. Rousseau dogmatized in the name of Geneva. Joseph II brought Austria into it, and England also played its part.

In what way, then, did Joseph II (1765-1790) contribute to the formation of a humanitarian society? And in what way did he, in turn, betray the interests of the Catholic people? The answer is that, with him, philosophism became governmental. If Rousseau is the pontiff of the new order of things, Joseph II is its prince-protector. From the philosopher of Geneva came the program, but its application began in the states of the Emperor of Austria. It was this prince who officially laid the foundation stone for the new society.

Indeed, for philosophism to succeed in becoming governmental, two things had to happen: Catholic society had to be brought down, its members and institutions thwarted, and philosophical, encyclopedic ideas had to be protected. Throughout his reign, the son of the great Maria Theresa, Emperor of Catholic Austria, applied himself to this ungrateful and treacherous task. He wrote this letter to a cardinal: "From the moment I ascended the throne, I have made philosophy the legislator of my empire. Austria will receive a new form of it, I hate superstition, I will suppress convents, it is to them that we owe the decadence of the human spirit..."¹

The Catholic religion was thus humiliated and debased. It could be said that Joseph II sought to strip it of all its rays, to deteriorate it, to deprive it of everything that reminded people of its celestial origin, its divine mission, reducing it to being no more than a branch of administration, placed under the direction of the police, like the other branches of administration in his empire. Is he not, in fact, the author of a system of despotic bureaucracy, which placed every free and spontaneous manifestation of the Church under the tutelage of the police, and which, by preserving the name of Joseph II in history, surrounds it with a sad halo? Josephism is the name that has stuck to

the political-ecclesiastical system that subjected the Austrian Church to the most tyrannical bureaucracy. Relations with Rome, freedom of the pulpit, teaching in seminaries – all these sacrosanct matters were treated with indignity. “He abolished all convents dedicated to the contemplative life. The orders he tolerated were obliged to engage in teaching, and he dispensed them from choir singing and all other practices harmful to health. Police ordinances regulating worship stripped it of its beautiful and varied forms. The number of candles used at high mass was limited; to save wood, the dead were sewn into sacks instead of being buried in beers. “1 All these meticulous measures led Frederick of Prussia to jokingly refer to the emperor as “my brother the sacristan”. Alas, this sacristan king was obeying the program of the pontiff of Geneva, and other kings will become sacristans like him during the Revolution!

At the same time as humiliating the Church, Joseph II made philosophy, as he had written, the legislator of his empire. Philosophy regarded the emperor as the most faithful of its followers. He was only too right.¹ “Joseph II applied the abstract generalities that were so much in the news at the time, and which tended towards a goal without taking into account the means. “2 This goal was to reform society, to recast men as it were. Joseph II took this undertaking seriously. Not content with his plan to improve, he wanted to remake everything, regardless of race, custom or sentiment; he even intended to force all his subjects to speak the same language. In the first three years of his reign, he issued three hundred and seventy ordinances. Anyone who resisted was “a rascal”. He considered men “like clay made to be shaped at the will of the workman”.³ So he was tough.⁴ Surely, philosophers must have clapped their hands at seeing the royal maneuver carry out his plans in this way, and crushed if necessary to cement them together!¹ The Revolution will do more violently, but not differently.

From this abasement of the Church and this practical glorification of philosophism was to come a considerable act, sadness for the Church, enthusiasm for the philosophers, an open door for the Jews: the Edict of Toleration of 1781. “Persuaded of the great utility for religion and the State of true Christian tolerance”, Joseph II

ordered the toleration of all non-Catholic cults, and their free exercise in private. The edict also extended to the Jews. The Emperor granted them the faculty "to attend Christian schools, high schools and universities, with the right to obtain the degrees of doctor of philosophy, medicine or law, and to exercise all professions".² Their power in Austria dates from this edict.

As one Israelite author gratefully put it: "At the end of the last century, a monarch ascended the imperial throne of Austria, who took it upon himself to restore the smile to the lips of the Jew, which had been scarred by pain and shame. "3 It's true, he restored the smile to the scarred lips of the Jewish people; but he made it disappear from the lips of his holy mother, the Church, which he had showered with outrages!4 Remarkably, Joseph II and Louis XVI undertook the emancipation of the Israelites at almost the same time, and both showered the poor children of Israel with the same benefits. And yet, their work is very different. That's because the spirit was quite different. With Louis XVI, emancipation was inspired by Christian charity; with Joseph II, by philosophy. While seeking to rehabilitate the Jews, Louis XVI watched over the interests of the Catholic people with jealous solicitude; Joseph II betrayed them through Josephism.

VI

Betrayed by English egoism.

As origins of the humanitarian society, we have already found: Voltairianism, the dogmatism of Rousseau, the skepticism and licentiousness of the French salons, the governmental philosophism of Joseph II. Following them must be English egoism.

An observer as profound as he is disinterested has painted this picture of England: "There is in Europe a nation formidable for its immense power, and worthy of honor for the great strides it has made in the sciences and the arts; a nation which holds in its hands, over the whole surface of the globe, powerful means of action, which it knows how to employ with truly admirable sagacity and astuteness. Since this nation was the first, in modern times, to go through the various phases I of a religious and political revolution, it has studied passions in their paroxysm and crime in all its forms. All kinds of springs are known to her. She is not fooled by the vain names that passions and interests are given in times of revolution. Its sensibility is too blunted to be easily aroused to the torments that have flooded other countries with blood and tears. In the midst of the agitation and heat of disputes, it knows how to maintain its inner peace; and although it is permissible to foresee perilous situations for it in the more or less distant future, it enjoys, in the meantime, the calm provided by its constitution, its habits, its wealth, and above all the Ocean, which forms a belt around it. Placed in such an advantageous position, this nation spies on the progress of other peoples, in order to harness them to its chariot, if they have the simplicity to listen to its flattery; it at least tries to hinder their progress, when a noble independence withdraws them from its influence. Always eager to expand through the arts and an eminently mercantile policy, she manages to cover with a veil the crass interests that move her. Religion and political ideas, when it comes to another people, are perfectly indifferent to her; she nevertheless knows how to use these weapons with skill to make friends, to overthrow her adversaries, and to catch them all in the net that her merchants keep continually stretched to the four corners of the globe. "1

How thought-provoking this picture is! Here, then, is a nation which, having first known and experienced, in the days of Charles I and Cromwell, what Revolution is, has had the talent to rid itself of it, to cast its venom on other peoples, its brothers, and to keep it alive. *Ab aquilone pandetur malum*,² says the Bible: from aquilon shall evil descend; England has taken it upon herself to justify the prophecy once again. Placed, as it were, by its topographical situation, on the flanks of the Aquilon, it has been transformed from the Isle of Saints that it originally was, into a pitiless region from which many storms have descended on Europe and the rest of the world. But doesn't the Bible, which England has used as a means of government, also say: The Lord hates him who sows dissension among the brethren?³ Far be it from us to underestimate the solid and precious qualities of the English people, their foresight, their prudence, their skill in execution, their perseverance, and what is like the embodiment of these qualities, the imposing pleiad of their statesmen. "These statesmen carefully seek out what can help or hinder them in all nations. They do not stop at the political order; they penetrate to the very heart of each society; they unravel what is its vital principle, what are the causes of the strength and energy of each people. "1 If this need to seek out and unravel in other peoples were only aimed at safeguarding English interests in a loyal defense, there would be nothing to say. But don't they seek out and unravel in others in order to encourage the development of evil passions, and the need to blow up a storm? This is the evil, *ab aquilone malum*! In the 18th century, this island was like a laboratory where all poisons were prepared. Discovered elsewhere, they came to England to be prepared, and from there to circulate in the veins of Europe. Before his trip to England, Voltaire was a brilliant poet, skeptical only in passing; by the time he returned from England, nourished by the impiety of Chubb, Tindal and others, he had added a scholarly skepticism to his witty skepticism. Before Voltaire knew England and Locke," wrote Victor Cousin, "he was not Voltaire, and the xviii century was still searching for itself... To become a school leader, he had to meet, in a neighboring country, a large party in possession of an entire doctrine. When he arrived in England, Voltaire

was nothing more than a discontented poet; England made him a philosopher.” When Rousseau was condemned in Paris and Geneva for the boldness of the *Social Contract*, it was in the home of the English philosopher Hume that he found refuge and protection. So it is with the other evil geniuses who have fomented the storms of this century: England has provided them with their funeral wings!¹

It is all too true, then, that English egoism has used error and evil against the continent, against sister nations. The humanitarian society, whose pernicious elements were thus favored as they appeared, grew prodigiously thanks to this egoism. Was this not the most deplorable betrayal of the interests of the Christian people? In truth, have the Jews shown themselves to be more selfish than the English in their dealings with the nations?

VII

Confluence of all these betrayals in secret or Masonic societies.

There is a secret confluence of all these betrayals.

Voltaire and the Encyclopedists toppled the palisades of Christian society, substituting the sceptical, rebellious and libertine spirit for the Christian spirit. The palisades fell, and a humanitarian society was built: Rousseau provided its foundations, the French salons influenced its morals, and Joseph II introduced government. English egoism protected the seeds and elements of a sinister society wherever they arose.

Christianity, however, was still too firmly established as a public power for the new society to risk growing up as a public rival. That's why darkness is called in as a helper, and secret societies become the construction site where the various parts of the humanitarian society are prepared.

We don't need to research the origins of secret societies here. What we do need to point out is that, despite certain appearances of religious respect that may have surrounded these origins and deceived the simpletons, the secret societies, diverse in their modes as in their lodges, all have the same background, pursue the same goal: to do away with Christ, to get rid of him in order to stick to humanity, and if necessary deify it. They have nothing to do with God, since they do away with Christ; they emanate from God's adversary. So, in the 18th century, they appear to be the confluence of all the treasons listed above. Voltaire was one of their supreme leaders; his venomous pen became the strongest hammer of Masonic destruction. All the encyclopedists were members. French salons made their entry following the Duc d'Antin, elected Grand Master in 1756.¹ The English government encouraged them in the rest of Europe, and Joseph II carried out their orders. As philosopher or prince betrays the cause of Christ and the interests of the Christian people, he feels the need to make a pact with darkness.

We've left aside the question of the origins of secret societies, but the most important observation is that towards the end of the eighteenth century, these various societies merged and lost their

particular denominations of Manichaeans, Albigensians, Templars, Socinians, Martinists, Illuminati, etc., in the synthetic denomination of Freemasons. Freemasonry is the vast abyss that, along with the betrayals of the eighteenth century, receives the vapors and pestilences of previous centuries, black tributaries of apostasy! It seems as if the Prophet's word of vengeance hovers over it: Behold, hell has stretched out its bowels, and opened its mouth to infinity; and all that is mighty, illustrious and glorious, with all the people, will descend into it.¹ Everything descends into Freemasonry!

But Freemasonry itself, like Voltairianism, like other betrayals, will profile the Jews amply, superabundantly, since it is the confluence of betrayals. There will come a time when this cry of alarm will be heard: "Judaism rules the world, and it must necessarily be concluded either that Masonry has become Jewish, or that Judaism has become a Freemason." ²

It was in the eighteenth century that this happened. A special chapter is needed for this clarification.

CHAPTER VI

DEGENERATE CHRISTIANS UNITED IN FREEMASONRY

FREEMASONRY OPENS UP TO JUDAISM

I

Clandestine assembly at Wilhemsbad in Nassau (1781): formidable for the concentration of all Masonic forces. It also presents a serious particularity: the admissibility of Jews in Freemasonry.

In 1781, a clandestine assembly was held in Wilhemsbad, in the Hanau region, two or three leagues from Frankfurt on the Mein. It was to go down in history as the Wilhemsbad Convent.

At this convent, all the secret societies came together. They called to each other from one end of the earth to the other, like sinister birds that had been made to understand that the corpse of the old social order was being prepared and would be delivered to them.

The dangerous Professor Weishaupt¹, founder of the all-too-famous German Illuminism sect, was the inspiration behind the project, and it is Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, one of Frederick II's generals, who presides, as Grand Master, over the Masonic concentration that is about to take place.... "Under the secret inspiration of Weishaupt and on the official convocation of the Duke of Brunswick, agents and deputies of secret societies had flocked from all parts of Europe, from the depths of America and from the very confines of Asia. They were, as it were, all the elements of Masonic chaos," says Barruel, "gathered together in the same den. 1 There were names from all classes: Weishaupt, Knigge, Villermoz, la Chappe de la Henzière, the Count of Virieu, the Marquis de Chefdebien, etc., etc., etc.. The King of Prussia, the Prince of Saxe-Coburg and other princes were far and away in favor of the assembly's doctrines.² The debris of the old secret societies, Templar, Albigensian, Manichenian, Socinian, Cabalistic, met there with the new sects of the Enlightened, Martinists, Perfectibilists, Freemasons, Rosicrucians, Seers, Spirits of

the Third Heaven, Swedenborgians, United Friends: the old leaven and the new leaven!

What secrets were communicated and resolutions adopted in this sinister convent? History only knows about them through private depositions.

I won't tell you the secrets I bring with me, but what I can tell you is that there is a conspiracy afoot, so well woven and so deep-rooted, that it will be very difficult for religion and governments not to succumb: confession of Count de Virieu, delegated to the Wilhemsbad convent by the French Martinists.³

In 1787, Cardinal Caprara, then Apostolic Nuncio in Vienna, echoing what had been communicated to him, addressed a memorandum to the Pope, concluding with these prophetic words: "The danger is approaching, for from all these insane dreams of Illuminism and Freemasonry a frightening reality must emerge. Visionaries have their time, the revolution they foretell will have its own."¹

These depositions were very serious. But the very fact that all occult societies were concentrated in Freemasonry cast a sufficiently frightening light on what might have been decided at the Wilhemsbad convent.

The convent also contained another fearsome peculiarity: Judaism had been admitted. (Not, of course, honest Judaism, but a perverted Judaism, like so many degenerate Christians).

But what! is there anything in this admission of Judaism that should surprise, and above all appear as a new danger? Throughout the centuries of Christianity, haven't Jews been born members of secret societies?

Much less so than is generally supposed. There are important explanations to be offered here.

II

Exaggeration of a thesis that assumes the Jews have been organized into a vast secret society since their general dispersal, inspiring other secret societies and pursuing an overall plan against Christian society.

An opinion has been propagated today which claims "that a center of command and direction has always existed among the Jews from their general dispersion to the present day; that this direction is in the hands of occult princes, whose succession is regularly perpetuated; and that therefore the Jewish nation has always been conducted as an immense secret society which in turn gives impetus to other secret societies. "1

This is an exaggerated thesis, as at odds with the texts of divine Scripture as it is with the facts of history.

Indeed:

1. Scripture says of the punishment of the Jews: I will scatter, says the Lord, the house of Israel among all 'nations with a shaking, like that which Von gives to wheat when it is shaken in a sieve: and a single grain will not fall to the ground, but will be pushed away by the general shaking.² All the Nations carried out this order. The Jewish people scattered among them perfectly resembled grains of wheat that a violent agitation separates by pushing them to different places. But if we suppose them to be directed, organized in their dispersal and reporting to a constant, albeit occult, center, this state of agitation and general jumble ceases; they are no longer sifted, but organized. God's sieve is disproved.

2. Scripture goes on to say: "For many days the children of Israel will be without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, without an altar..."¹ The text of the prophet Hosea is clear: without a prince, without a sacrifice and without an altar. There can therefore be no question of princes who would have commanded and led the whole body of the scattered nation, and whose regular, though hidden, succession would have been perpetuated.²

3. To admit that the Jewish nation was led like an immense secret society, and in turn gave impetus to other secret societies, would be to recognize that it had a superior organization and power

to those it enjoyed at the time of its habitation in Palestine, where schism separated its tribes and neighboring peoples constantly harassed it. The thunderbolt that scattered it far and wide would only have served to restore its astonishing organization and influence.

4. This is to assume that the action of the holy Catholic Church was largely ineffective in its precautionary measures against the Jews. She who, throughout the Middle Ages, watched over the Nations with the vigilance of an alarmed and prudent mother, and who, obeyed by the Nations and their governments, advanced as beautiful as Jerusalem and as terrible as an army arrayed in battle,¹ could not, in this hypothesis, have prevented the Synagogue from also having had its army arrayed in battle everywhere.

5. Finally, the reasons given by these authors for supposing the Jews to be organized in a vast secret society and to have been pursuing, since their dispersion, an overall plan against Christian society, have the great fault of passing, in their accusations, from the particular to the general, or of elevating isolated facts, albeit very important ones, to the level of general and constant rules of conduct.

This, we repeat, is an exaggerated thesis.

Here is what we believe to be historically true about the relationship between secret societies and Judaism.

III

What is historically true: until the 18th century, there were affinities and passing liaisons between secret societies and Judaism. Common hatred of Christianity. Borrowings from the Cabala. However, nothing proves that Jews are the direct inspirers or members of these societies. There is even evidence to the contrary.

Until the 18th century, there was no alliance as such, but only indecisive or fleeting affinities and liaisons.

These affinities are of two kinds: some stem from hatred; others from the loans made by certain secret societies to the Cabal.

A, - Hatred common to secret societies and the Synagogue

That Judaism is predisposed to Masonry is beyond dispute. This predisposition stems, alas, from its hatred of Jesus Christ and his Church, but in no way, however, from its dogmas and morals, which are part of revealed religion. This distinction is very important, because it is proof and hope that, for the supreme goal of religious and social destruction they pursue, secret societies have never obtained and will never obtain the support of true Israelites: the dogmas of the unity and majesty of God, with which Israel has remained imbued and as if dazed since Sinai, are opposed to them; also, the morals of the patriarchal family; also, the instinct of self-preservation. But it is an unfortunate fact of historical record that, against Jesus Christ, his Church and their works, Hebrew antagonism, in search of revenge, far from disavowing the assistance of occult societies, has always used them, more or less, according to its own interests; more or less, depending on the willingness of the occult societies themselves; for it should not be forgotten that, throughout the Middle Ages, the Jew was so despised, was for many such a vile and discarded being, that even the most unbelieving did not care much for his help.

B, - Borrowings from the Cabal by secret societies

The literature on secret societies points out that many of them have an oriental, if not completely Jewish, tinge, which is said to have come from the Cabala. Here again, it's fair to discern carefully.

The term Cabala in Hebrew means received tradition, traditional teaching.

a) From Moses to Jesus Christ, the Kabbalah has been an oral but secret teaching on the most sublime truths of religion. "The Cabala, which may be called the philosophy of the Hebrews, when it was still in its purity, had the particularity of giving those sublime notions to which the most profound geniuses among the pagan philosophers deprived of the help of Revelation have never been able to attain... It solved the most formidable problems of sacred metaphysics. The Doctors of the Synagogue teach with one voice that the hidden meaning of Scripture was revealed on Sinai to Moses, who initiated Joshua and his other intimate disciples to this knowledge; that this secret teaching was then transmitted orally from generation to generation, without it being permitted to put it in writing. "1

This is the good and healthy Cabala.²

From the time of the Golgotha crime and the dispersion of the Jewish people, the Kabbalah is altered and becomes what the Talmud calls vinegar son of wine. It ceases to be a compendium of ancient and sound traditions, and becomes a compendium of the rabbis' mystical explanations, and also of their fantastic reveries and vain subtleties.¹ It seeks solutions in the arrangement of letters and numbers: an abstruse science, without shores, with dizzying combinations!

This unauthorized Cabala is then subdivided into :

1° Speculative Cabala. - It may be harmless for rabbis who indulge in it, but not for Christians who want to follow them in these abstruse studies: the famous Pico della Mirandola and Reuchelin, in the XVth century, lost their faith in it;

2° Practical Cabala. - This is where the mysteries and secrets of the Kabbalah are to be found: bizarre procedures, terrible oaths, sinister symbols, borrowed not only from infidel Judea, but also from Persia, India, Egypt and Chaldea. As a perfidious receiver, this practical Cabala also admits formulas and operations that are hateful to the Christian religion and to Christians.

The result is that the Cabala, which has become the vinegar son of wine, is, in its speculative part, a false and dangerous science; and in its practical part, it is infernal.

From the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, the greatest glory of this false and evil Kabbalah coincided with witchcraft, legal as-

trology and alchemy, which exercised their empire over superstitious crowds and even entered the court of kings. The Cabala took its place alongside these unhealthy sciences, becoming their companion, if not their inspiration! Secret societies took a vile hold of both. Hence the links that historians point out between these societies and Cabalistic science; hence also the tinge, if not Jewish, at least Eastern, that colors the symbols and rites in use in most of these societies.

But here's the thing:

Did the inventors of these rites and symbols accept this hue from Cabalist doctors, or did they borrow it themselves from the Cabala or from magic? Did they get it from Egypt, Persia or a synagogue? The answer to these various questions is full of hesitation, due to the inadequacy of the documents.¹

Another important remark. It is here that we must be careful not to pass from the particular to the general. This cabalistic science, abstruse in its speculative part, bad and wicked in its practical part, was known only to the few in Israel. Many honest Jews, busy with their daily business and patriarchal mores, although they did not love the Saviour of the world and his Church, had no inclination, no leisure, for this trade with the Cabala and magic.

C. - Notwithstanding these affinities, the link between secret societies and Judaism remained undecided until the 18th century.

Indeed:

The Church kept watch, and with it the most Christian kings. This active, combined surveillance made it difficult, if not impossible, for the Hebraic Kabbalah and occult societies to hold *sui vis conciliabula*. This is one of the reasons why historical documents are lacking.

What's more (and this is an observation not sufficiently taken into account by the supporters of the exaggerated thesis), secret societies had a certain aristocratic air throughout the Middle Ages. Not just anyone could join. Satan also had his black castes! In these times of feudal lordships, his perspicacity, which maneuvers while taking into account the evolution of mankind, gave the secret societies of the Albigenians, Templars and others an appearance of pride and haughtiness. A Templar would never have embraced a Jew as a com-

panion in arms and darkness; and all that the Albigensian lords were able to grant was sometimes to entrust a complaisant Hebrew with the office of bailiff. Resorting to the secrets of the practical Cabala was to be like resorting to usury: in haste, and under disguise. It's famous, the picture inspired by Shakespeare, we recall with regret; but it helps to determine and limit Israel's share in secret societies in the Middle Ages:

"For such a poor man to address the Jew, for him to approach that dark little house so ill-famed, for him to speak to that man who, it is said, crucifies little children, requires no less than the horrible pressure of the taxman. Between the taxman, who wants his marrow and blood, and the devil, who wants his soul, he'll take the Jew for his middle ground. So when he had exhausted his last resource, when his bed was sold, when his wife and children, lying on the ground, were trembling with fever or crying out for bread, then, head down and more bent than if he'd been carrying his load of wood, he slowly made his way towards the odious house, and stayed a long time at the door before knocking. When the Jew carefully opened the small gate, a strange and difficult dialogue began. What did the Christian say? In the name of God? The Jew killed him, your God. Out of pity? What Christian has ever pitied a Jew? You don't need words, you need a pledge. What can he give who has nothing? The Jew will say softly: My friend, in accordance with the orders of the king, our sire, I lend neither on bloody garments nor on ploughshares. No, I only want you as a pledge... "1

Something similar was certainly true of recourse to the mysteries of the practical Cabala: one had to tremble and feel uncomfortable when one came to ask a Cabala man for some formula or recipe!

IV

But in the 18th century, Freemasonry opened up before them. A very likely explanation for the way they were admitted at the time of the Wilhemsbad clandestine assembly.

In the 18th century, things became more serious.

The various secret societies concentrated within Freemasonry. By the same token, they took on a new character. They abandoned the aristocratic form that many of them had inherited from the Middle Ages, and took on a less exclusive, more popular organization. Satan's eye, which attentively follows the developments of humanity, sees the coming of the reign of democracy or the universal, and then his lodges, his dens, also take on this democratic character; they open up to everyone. The Wilhemsbad convent is the great meeting place.

How did Judaism get involved?

In 1754, a certain Jew of the Portuguese ritual, named Martinez Paschalis, had founded a sect in France based on the Cabala, and in which Jews were naturally admitted. From 1754 to 1768, he had propagated it in France under the name of the order of cozens (Hebrew word) or priests.¹ After the death of Martinez Paschalis, his disciple the famous Saint-Martin (a young officer of the Foix regiment, with whom he has often been confused) had given the sect, through his work *Les Erreurs et de la Vérité par un philosophe inconnu* (Errors and Truth by an Unknown Philosopher), a considerable development, which from Paris and Lyon, its centers, had spread as far as Russia. The adherents had taken the definitive name of French Martinists or Illuminati. All this had been like the preface to a positive link between Judaism and secret societies.

The link was established and consummated at the time of the Wilhemsbad convent.

Judaism was admitted into the Masonic fold in two ways, in fact and in law;

In fact:

Because, through the French Martinist or Illuminated sect, Jewish by origin, the sons of Israel or their friends entered the assembly with full rights.

Because the English lodges of the assembly are favorable to them. The notorious incredulous Toland was the soul of these lodges, and Toland published these two singularly instructive writings: *Raisons pour naturaliser les juifs de la Grande-Bretagne* (1715); *Nazarenus ou le Christianisme judaïque, païen et mahométan* (1718);¹

Because in Germany, and this is the most important fact, particularly in Berlin, an ardent Israelite youth was being formed, enthusiastic about Lessing, who protected it, a youth passionate to excess about Romanticism and pleasure.² Among its ranks was Dohm, who in this very year of the Wilhemsbad convent (1781) published the Program for the Political Emancipation of the Jews, which the Jacobin Masonic lodges would have executed in full in Paris in 1791. (We discuss Dohm in the next chapter.)

Admitted in fact to the Wilhemsbad Convent, Judaism was also admitted in law:

Indeed, did not Weishaupt, the convent's inspirer and ordainer, inscribe at the head of German Illuminism this official invitation: To bring together, in view of a high interest and by a lasting bond, educated men from all parts of the globe, of all classes and religions, despite the diversity of their opinions and passions.... To constantly recruit personnel from all ranks, all classes, all states, all conditions.¹ The barriers of Masonic lodges fell before Judaism!

The official admission of perverted Judaism into Freemasonry is thus almost certainly proven.²

Some authors go so far as to say that even at this time, Freemasonry was moved and disturbed by what it had just done.³ There was good reason for this!... One day," recounts the Bible in the 1st book of Kings, "Saul, chosen by the Lord, then rejected from before his face, had come to consult the sorceress of Endor. He had been led away in the greatest secrecy, and had taken other clothes so as not to be recognized.

"He told the sorceress to summon a dead man, and no sooner had he spoken than the dead man appeared: an old man covered with a cloak.

"The king and the sorceress recognized Samuel. God had indeed allowed the prophet to emerge from the earth and show himself in

the lair of magic.

“And at the sight of him, the sorceress herself, troubled by this appearance, gave a great cry.

“And Samuel, addressing the unfaithful king, said to him: ‘The Lord has torn apart your kingdom... and tomorrow you will be with me. “1

In addition to attesting to the age of magic, this scene contains several features that can be applied to the Wilhemsbad convent.

Freemasonry is the magician here;

A section of Christian society, princes, dukes and philosophers, who had become infidels, gathered together in the greatest secrecy;

The sorceress evoked the dead, and the dead who presented themselves were the Jewish people, this revenant who had no civil rights!

And Freemasonry itself was moved and disturbed by the apparition:

For it seemed as if this perverted Judaism were saying to all those degraded societies unfaithful to God, and over which it would gradually establish its influence: Tomorrow you will be with me, my plans will be yours!

V

The Masonic lodges are preparing to take" the cause of their emancipation into their own hands.

Masonry's obsequiousness towards Judaism will not be slow to show itself.

But how?

The question of the emancipation of the Jews was put before public opinion, and Louis XVI generously undertook to put it to rest: *ch bien*, if any difficulties arose, Freemasonry took charge of resolving them.

It would be to anticipate events if I were to provide here the proof of this occult assistance; it will suffice to lift a corner of the veil:

When the question, taken away from Louis XVI by the Revolution, came before the Constituent Assembly (1789-1791), the deputies in charge of passing it were all Freemasons;

It was Mirabeau who lent him the persevering support of his eloquence, and Mirabeau was a Freemason, in the high ranks, intimate with Weishaupt and his followers, present in Germany in the year following the Wilhemsbad convent, and, furthermore, his links with Berlin Judaism, while less well known, are indisputable;¹

And when, after two years' hesitation, the Constituent Assembly, in its penultimate session, still hesitates, it is the Freemason and Jacobin Duport who will demand its vote, summarily and with a threat on his lips.

This was the first occult service rendered to Judaism by Freemasonry. After that, others would follow. It is, in the final analysis, the formidable corridor through which the Jewish question is sure to find an exit, the very dark corridor through which the sons of Israel will be able to emerge at ease into society.

CHAPTER VII

FORMATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN SOCIETY AN-
OTHER ELEMENT OF FORMATION, A SMALL GROUP OF
ADVANCED JEWS

I

What advanced Israelites are. What is the key difference between them and degenerate Christians? Their role as intermediaries between their more timid co-religionists and the new society taking shape. –

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a number of prominent Israelites, some in Germany, others in France, were beginning to find the secluded life of the Jewry very restrictive. They longed to see an end to the social isolation in which their race had hitherto been confined, and had confined itself. They would not, however, have sought the support of secret societies to find this wider life; no! for there is too much religion, honesty and righteousness in their conduct. They can profiteer from the actions of these societies, from their occult indulgences, but without conspiring with them. These Israelites are enamored of philosophism, charmed by philanthropy: they hope that, under the scepter of this king and queen, Judaism will find the means to live in harmony with the rest of the human race. If that means making advances, they'll make them.

This is the small group of advanced Jews, so called because their ideas are new to Israel, and because of the steps they are willing to take.

Parallel to the perverted Judaism we have seen allying itself with secret societies is another Judaism, which forms a kind of penumbra, a gradual passage from light to dark, extremely favorable to humanitarian society. Doesn't the Spirit of Deceit delight, in order to make its dupes and its victims, in smoothness and transitions?

Another characteristic to be noted in the physiognomy of this small group, a characteristic that can be seen even in the Israelites of the secret societies: in their advances, there will always be a limit, behind which there will always be a way out.

there will always be a boundary, behind which the old Judaism can be found and upheld. They do not abandon their strong secular positions: a prudence that degenerate Christians do not imitate. We would be greatly mistaken if we imagined that in the formation of humanitarian society, the Jews, who met with these Christians, imitated them in the contempt and abandonment of their religious convictions. Far from it. There is a crucial difference between Christians and Jews who came into contact towards the end of the eighteenth century: the former completely abandoned their Catholic traditions and evangelical mores, while the latter carefully refrained from abandoning their Sinai traditions, and above all the bond of race. They may no doubt vary, especially in the future, on the interpretation to be given to the Messiah they are still awaiting, and on the greater or lesser value of certain ritual practices; but they keep the Decalogue of Moses; they keep the dogma of the unity of God; they keep the robust constitution of the Israelite family; they keep fraternal union, and they also keep the hope of universal domination. All these reserves constitute an immense force with which they enter humanitarian society, while degenerate or merely philosophical Christians surrender everything.

The small battalion of advanced Jews lends itself to some very interesting studies. Suffice it to say that they were the intermediaries between the great civil society and the narrow society of the Jewish communities. Surprisingly, when they set about bringing them together, they found perhaps fewer obstacles on the side of the former than on the side of the latter. With civil society, the drawbridge was only too low, with its weakened beliefs and degenerate mores. It had not been lowered with the people confined to the Jewries, who remained defiant, timid and suspicious. Isn't this always the result of misfortune and servitude? The Jewries that contained these poor people could be likened to veritable rat holes. Their inhabitants had adopted the same timidity and mannerisms. The rat's long white moustache, prominent eyebrows, sharp, penetrating gaze and devious habits give it a fine, respectable physiognomy. "1 It follows that, when the time came to make contact with the Christians, the most determined of them did as La Fontaine says of his rats:

Put their noses in the air, show their heads a little, then go back into their rat's nest, then come out again, take four steps, then set off in search.

That's how the Jews went when it came to making a break for it in society. A small band of them, bolder than the rest, encouraged each other, set out on their quest, and gradually became the initiators of their more timid brethren.

II

Who, among these Israelites or their allies, were the initiators of the forward march? Four main ones: Lessing; the parable of the three rings or reciprocal tolerance of the three religions, Jewish, Christian and Muslim.

Among these initiators, four deserve special mention. The first, in chronological order, is Lessing.

Lessing¹ (1729-1781) was not born a Jew, but it's fair to say that he passed with arms and baggage under the tents of Israel, drawn by his lifelong affection for Mendelssohn and the great Jewish family. He was the son of a Lutheran pastor. He made extensive use of free examination, and was truly a freethinker, but in the softer sense of the word. Not daring to attack the then all-powerful official Lutheranism head-on, he waged a partisan war against it, rehabilitating, under various pretexts, either its antagonists or its victims. Hence his predilection for the Jewish race. He never missed an opportunity to praise them at the expense of Christians. As a young man, he published a short comedy in Leipzig, *The Jews*, a tiny test of a talent that was still finding its way. But already the Israelites had the starring role. Finally, he crowned his career with his great drama *Nathan the Wise*, in which, bringing together the three religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, he combined action and stage effects in such a way as to give his Jewish hero, Nathan, the noblest physiognomy. Islam and Christianity serve as a pedestal for this magnanimous Jew, whose greatness of soul surpasses all the imperfections of the characters around him.

Notwithstanding this bias, the drama of *Nathan the Wise* did not bring good fortune to Judaism, for it introduced into its ranks the first ideas of indifference and even skepticism. Indeed, the parable of the three rings, which forms the centerpiece of the drama, brought them to its conclusion.

This parable was already famous in the Middle Ages; but the conclusion set out in *Nathan's* drama is by Lessing. Here they are, one after the other.

The parable of the three rings¹

In ancient times, in the East, there lived a man who held in his dear hand a ring of inestimable value. The stone was an opal, in which a hundred beautiful colors were played out, and which had the secret virtue of pleasing both God and man to those who wore it with confidence. No wonder, then, that this man from the East never took the ring off his finger, and took steps to ensure that it remained in his home... Finally, from son to son, this ring reached a father who had three sons. All three were equally obedient to him, and he couldn't help loving all three of them equally. From time to time, one or the other or the third seemed the most worthy of the ring – the one who was alone with him at the time, when the other two were not sharing the effusions of his heart – and he had the paternal weakness to promise the ring to each of them in turn. Things went on like this for as long as he lived; but death came, and the good father found himself in a painful predicament: he suffered at the thought of wounding two of his sons who had trusted his word. He secretly sent for a goldsmith, to whom he commissioned two rings modelled on his own, advising him to spare neither trouble nor money to make them identical, absolutely identical. The artist succeeds. When he brings him the rings, the father himself can't tell which ring has been used as a model. Full of joy, he calls his three sons, each one individually; he gives each one individually his blessing and his ring, and dies... No sooner had he died, than each son arrived with his ring, claiming to be the head of the house. We search, we argue, we complain. No use: it's impossible to discern the true ring – almost as impossible as it is for us today to discern the true faith... At last, the sons turned to the law. Each of them swore to the judge that he held the ring directly from his father's hand, – and this was true, – having received from him long ago the promise of being put in possession of the ring's privileges, – and this was no less true! The father, each of them assured themselves, could not have deceived them; and before dropping such a suspicion on a father so cherished and so worthy of it, each of them preferred to accuse his brothers of fraud, however happy he might have been to think nothing but good of them...

Lessing's conclusion. - If you want my advice and not my sentence," said the judge, "take things as they are. Since each of you got your ring from your father, let each of you firmly believe that your ring is good. Perhaps your father didn't want to put up with the tyranny of a single ring in his home any longer. El certainly he loved all three of you, and loved you equally, since he didn't want to depress two of you to favor one. Well, aspire to imitate this pure, unprejudiced love. Let each of you strive to bring to light the virtue of your ring! Let him help this virtue by his gentleness, by his cordiality, by his beneficence, by his complete abandonment to God! And if then the virtues of the stones manifest themselves in the children of your grandchildren, within a thousand and a thousand years, I will summon you again before this tribunal. Then a wiser man than me will sit in judgement. Now go!

So spoke the judge, modestly.

Under an appearance of bonhomie, how perfidious is this conclusion!

The three rings symbolize the three religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam;

Lessing advises them to tolerate each other, but with such contempt for the Divinity represented by this weak father reduced to deceiving his children!

No, eternal Truth doesn't play games with men like that!

III

Mendelssohn, the most remarkable Israelite of modern times. However, he creates new paths in Israel; rabbis' alarms; young German Israelites get involved, they go astray.

Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) was Lessing's pupil.¹

Mendelssohn is undoubtedly the most imposing Jewish figure of modern times. In Berlin, he was known as the Socrates of Germany. Indeed, no other German writer of his time was able to clothe philosophical thought with a simpler yet nobler elegance, in the form of epistolary or dialogical writing. Two things will interest the reader about this honest Mendelssohn: the simple story of his marriage and his role as conciliator between Israelites and Christians.

Moses Mendelssohn was very ugly, despite his expressive, gentle eyes. His waist, contorted and stunted, was forever disfigured by a huge hump. The daughter of one of his co-religionists, a wealthy Hamburg merchant, Miss Guggenheim, read his books and fell in love with the author.

Guggenheim met Mendelssohn at the Pyrmont baths, made him promise to visit him in Hamburg and introduced him to his daughter. The meeting was embarrassing. Clearly, Mendelssohn was quite different from what the enthusiastic young girl had imagined. So, the next day, the future father-in-law, receiving Mendelssohn face-to-face in his offices, stammered out vague phrases about the singularities of young girls, clumsily disguising an unpleasant truth.

Mendelssohn heroically got straight to the point. It's because I'm hunchbacked," he told her. Well, so be it! Let's say no more about it. Just allow me to take leave of your daughter."

Permission granted, Mendelssohn went to pay this visit which, in his mind, was to be his last. The girl was working by a window, and didn't dare look up from her work. Mendelssohn didn't dare look at her. A little more and we parted without even noticing each other.

Suddenly, the young girl asked a strange question:

"Do you think, sir, that marriages are written in heaven?

Without a doubt," replied Mendelssohn. You know that, according to Talmudic tradition, when a soul is sent down from heaven, the

name of the one who is to be united with it on earth is proclaimed at the same time. link was thus at my birth; at the same time, the house informed me that my wife would be disfigured by a formidable bump. Great God!" I exclaimed, "let my wife have her height and beauty, and give me the hump that would take away her charms.

The girl understood that she would be happy; she looked up at Mendelssohn, and the marriage was concluded.¹

Mendelssohn fulfilled the delicate role of conciliator between his co-religionists and the Christians all his life, and made it consist, on the one hand, of raising the Jews' opinion, and, on the other, of enlightening his co-religionists on the obstacles to their rapprochement with society. The first part of his mission was easy enough to accomplish, for he added to the authority of his writings the example of his conduct. He wrote to Lava ter: "It is by virtue and not by controversial writings that I would like to refute the contemptible opinion that people have of the Jews. "2 But when it came to bringing his co-religionists closer to society, he found the going rather slippery. Faithful to Mosaic observances and Talmudic prescriptions, he could not, without a happy inconsistency, seek a bridge to Christianity: he sought it in philosophism. Or rather: in philosophy. For philosophy, soiled and as it were lost in the eighteenth century in philosophism, rediscovered in the thoughts and pen of this son of Israel the distinction it had had in the time of Socrates and Plato. His *Phaedo*¹ expresses this renaissance, alas, of a single day. It was rather his philanthropy, or practical philosophizing, that became his downfall. The Israelites, his co-religionists, knew little of the Bible, especially the Pentateuch. "Rabbinical and cabalist interpreters had so distorted its simple, primitive meaning as to make the code say everything except its true content "2 Mendelssohn undertook to translate it into German for his children, and then made it available to the public. The first Jewish-German translation ever published, it popularized the reading of the Bible and the use of German among Israelites; it was an event.³

The rabbis, especially those from Poland, were convinced that a philosophical fire was already licking the walls of the Jewish communities and threatening their habits. Perhaps they were right. "They

foresaw that Jewish youth would learn German language and literature, to the detriment of the study of Scripture and Talmud. "4 The reading of the Pentateuch translated by Mendelssohn was therefore forbidden in Furth, in June 1779, and on the following July 17, the penalty of banishment from the Synagogue was decreed in Hamburg against anyone using the Pentateuch.¹

Despite this severity, the entire Israelite youth of Germany enthusiastically rallied to Mendelssohn's side and began studying with zeal. It has been said that "the internal deliverance of the Jews dates from this period "2 . They were wrong: it was their dissolution! Indeed, since philosophy deprived of the help of the Catholic faith leads to cloudy summits or precipices, this youth, in becoming learned, also became, after Mendelssohn's death, reckless or licentious, and merged with that which we have encountered in secret societies, under the name of the Berlin Advanced Circle.³

For Mendelssohn, the pain he had felt at the doubts raised by the rabbis about his orthodoxy had halted his fury.⁴ His last writing was devoted to friendship. A libel had attacked the memory of Lessing, his friend and teacher, who was accused of atheism. Mendelssohn took up his defense; but he died suddenly on a sofa in front of the bust of Lessing, whose apology he was writing (1786).⁵

Unwittingly, perhaps, and solely out of a desire to find a means of reconciliation, he was the promoter of rationalism in Israel.¹ The influence of his ideas on the destiny of modern Judaism will be considerable. Would to God it had remained solitary! But another influence was to join his, recognizing him, if not as his inspiration, at least as his protector: that of Dohm's book.

IV

Dohm, from Prussia; the capital importance of his book on the Reform of the political situation of the Jews; this book was, in its occult influence, the counterpart of Rousseau's *Social Contract*.

Guillaume Dohm is an archivist in the service of His Majesty the King of Prussia and secretary to the Department of Foreign Affairs. Halévy and other Jewish historians call him "the immortal Dohm", who during Frederick's lifetime was the first to raise his voice against the odious prejudices under which the Jews groaned.² His *De la Réforme politique de la situation des juifs*, 1781, was to have an immense impact. In a sense, this book was the counterpart to Rousseau's *Social Contract*. Dohm's *Political Reform* transports the conclusions drawn from the *Social Contract* to the Jewish question, and demands their realization. Two volcanoes are igniting, one in the Nations, the other in Israel, and mixing their lava.

It is therefore important to make the Prussian book known.

It presents, first and foremost and from beginning to end, an apology for the Jewish race and an explanation, with extenuating circumstances, of its defects. "The Jews were reduced to the sad position of being neither men nor citizens, for the sole reason that we persisted in denying them the rights of man and citizen. "1 We won't insist on this point of view.

But here are the formidable sides of this book, vaguely understood at the time it was published, auxiliaries to the formidable storms brewing in the shadows.

It is addressed and dedicated to sovereigns, almost like a program that the Revolution will make compulsory. Dohm urges all governments "to increase the number of good citizens by not forcing Jews to be worse than others¹ ". - I will dare to dedicate this writing respectfully to the sovereigns, and I will consider myself sufficiently rewarded if I have been able to direct their gaze on an object which seems to have escaped them until now, and yet so worthy of fixing them. "1 As if the sovereigns' care had not been exercised over the Jews, at the same time as their vigilance!

B. He expounds the theory of a State indifferent to religion,

neutral, allied and, what is more serious, dominating all religions. "The great and noble employment of government consists in mitigating the exclusive principles of all these different societies (Catholic, Lutheran, Socinian, Mohammedan), so that they do not turn to the prejudice of the great society. "2 - "Let the government allow each of these small, particular societies to have its own esprit de corps, to retain even its prejudices when they are not harmful; but let it strive to inspire each of its members to a greater degree of attachment to the State; and it will have achieved the great goal it should have in view, when the qualities of gentleman, peasant, scholar, craftsman, Christian and Jew are all subordinated to that of citizen. "3 This is atheistic neutrality. Note that this was written in 1781.

He passes the sponge of oblivion over the blood of Golgotha. "The Jew is even more of a man than he is a Jew1. "- The principles of exclusion, equally contrary to humanity and politics, which so visibly bear the imprint of the obscure centuries that saw their birth, are quite unworthy of the light that characterizes ours, and we should long ago have ceased to follow them. Our States, now firmly established, must welcome with open arms every citizen who conforms to the laws and who, by his industry, increases the wealth of the State. "1

b) He proclaimed the substitution of the State for the Church in the care of human generations. "Let a citizen be free to follow his own lights in matters of faith, he will love all the more the State which allows him to enjoy this freedom, and the traits of fanaticism will be blunted." - Sacred dogmas will always find it more and more difficult to inspire their followers with exclusive principles, when the State embraces these in general with equal affection and free from all prejudice. "2

He warns the Catholic clergy to keep quiet when Jews are invited to enter civil society, and threatens them if they object. "If the ministers of a religion that preaches only charity were uncharitable enough, blind enough, to advise against more humane treatment of a sect that gave rise to their own, we know what the rights of sovereigns are today. It is not even appropriate for the religion that has been exclusively favored until now, and which is called the dominant

one, to argue with the government if it grants similar privileges to other religions. How happy humanity and nations would be if this great principle had never been lost sight of! Let us hope, however, that the ministers of the dominant religion will rarely need to be reminded of this important principle today. But if it should be necessary, the wisdom of the government which has formed judicious plans of beneficence will know well how to execute them seriously and vigorously. "1 It is with these threats that Dohm's book ends.

Once again, all this is written in 1781, eight years before the French Revolution, and it is from Prussia that this program in favor of Judaism originates. Providence allowed the emancipation of the Jews to be prepared in the very place where Luther had claimed to emancipate reason. The duty of gratitude to Jesus Christ is cast off in the same place where obedience to the authority of the Pope was cast off. Dohm presents the complement to Luther's work for the sovereigns to sign.

This book is therefore the counterpart to the Social Contract. It had an unsuspected influence, more than can be said, on the opening of the Revolution. It put an end to the religious scruples and hesitations of many Jews. He is the clarion call of the Jewish cause, the signal for a step forward.²

V

Cerfbeer, hero of the siege of Strasbourg. Concert of action between Mendelssohn, Dohm and Cerfbeer.

But to the revelation of this book's formidable doctrine, it is important to add the events surrounding its publication. At this point in history, we find not only Mendelssohn, but also the famous Cerfbeer, hero of the siege of Strasbourg, whose portrait, role and influence we described in the first part of our book.

The events surrounding this publication are very curious. "The Jews of Alsace had approached Mendelssohn,¹ and asked him to draft a memorandum to be submitted to Louis XVI's Council of State, in order to urge that body to consider their unfortunate position with pity. The Jewish philosopher and regenerator refused to write the memoir himself, convinced that it would have been unsuccessful; he believed, quite rightly, that to combat these prejudices effectively, the pen of a non-Israelite was needed, as he himself says in one of his letters to Baron de Hirschen. To this end, he approached the young Dohm, who was living in Berlin as a military advisor and who accepted the proposal, motivated by his sense of the public good and the spirit of tolerance to which he owed Lessing's friend. The work was published in Dessau, Mendelssohn's home town, in 1781. "1

This is the link between Mendelssohn and Dohm, between the ideas of the one and the book of the other; Mendelssohn thought, Dohm wrote.

But there's another link between Dohm and Cerfbeer.

"The effect produced by Dohm's book was not confined to Germany; all liberal men of the time were deeply moved by it, and Mirabeau was inspired to publish a similar work in London. A French translation of Dohm's work appeared in 1781, to great acclaim.

"Through the intermediary of the banker Cerfbeer, Dohm sent six hundred copies of this French translation to Paris. At the capital's gate, as the bundle of books had been sent before receiving prior authorization to enter France, it had to undergo the imposition of seals in order to stand trial. However, thanks to the intervention of the astronomer Lalande and other considerable influences, Dohm and

his publisher Nicolaï were fortunate enough to obtain, within the prescribed interval of a year and a day, a favorable decision from the Minister Keeper of the Seals of the State; by rare exception, they were granted, not to bring the aforementioned volumes into Paris, but at least to be able to take them back at customs.

“When the owners of the work asked the *Chambre Syndicale*, in charge of such matters, to enforce this measure, the reply was that the bundle had long since been sent to the Bastille to be pilloried, in other words, to be destroyed: the books must therefore have been destroyed, and the Minister’s decision could no longer be complied with. – Our verbal information from the Cerfbeer family confirms the authenticity of this fact. “1

The following conclusions can be drawn from these admissions and events:

1° The fact that Dohm’s book was smuggled into France is sufficient indication that his supporters themselves did not consider its pages harmless.

2° The harshness of the French government, which, notwithstanding the complaints of those concerned, notwithstanding the protection of Lalande and other influential people, did not authorize the entry of the volumes into Paris, but simply withdrew them from customs, confirms the dangerous significance that was attributed to them.

3° The decree of the *Chambre Syndicale* that the volumes be pilloried was undoubtedly the consequence of this persuasion.²

The French translation was therefore unable to spread freely or abundantly; it didn’t matter. Mirabeau, as the curious document quoted reveals, read the book in its original or in translation, and drew inspiration from it. When the time came to speak about the Jews before the Constituent Assembly, this book would be his program.

VI

A man of great power comes to serve this forward march: Mirabeau. His close ties with the secret societies and the Jews of Berlin. He was preparing both the Revolution and the emancipation of the Israelites.

Comte de Mirabeau was the man in whom the diverse elements we have seen in the emerging humanitarian society were summed up, as if in a powerful synthesis. Imbued with the ideas of Rousseau, Voltairian in his morals, belonging to the French salons by birth, Josephist by his relations with Germany, initiated into the calculations of the English character, he is also the one on whom Masonry and the Synagogue cast their eyes, the one to realize its plans for Revolution, the other to realize its civil emancipation.

To understand Mirabeau, we need to study him not only in Versailles and Paris, where he was trained (1789-1791), but also in Germany, where his powerful talent was directed (1785-1788). The Masonic convent of Wilhemsbad and the salon of a famous Berlin Jewess exerted considerable influence on the man who was to open the doors of humanitarian society with a bang.

Indeed:

On his participation in the projects decided upon at Wilhemsbad, Barruel and Deschamps' documents say:

"The Comte de Mirabeau, whom the French Revolution was soon to make so famous, was entrusted with the task of bringing Illuminism to dominance in the lodges of Paris and the whole of France.

"Sent on a secret mission to Berlin by Louis XVI's own ministers for some political business, although his life up to then had been nothing but a web of treachery and monstrous immoralities, and that he had only been rescued from his judges and the scaffold by the King's clemency, he made his favorite company the first disciples of Weishaupt, Nicolaï, Biestter, Gedicke, and that Leuchscnring, teacher to the princes of Hesse-Darmstadt, nicknamed in the sect Leveller.

"In Brunswick, he was initiated into the latest mysteries of Illuminism by Mauvillon, a worthy pupil of Knigge and then professor at the Carolin College.

"Mirabeau knew how to appreciate all the new resources that Weishaupt's genius had been able to draw for a revolution in the organization of Masonry.

"Back in France, he began by introducing the new mysteries himself to the Amis réunis lodge. His first colleague was Talleyrand, Abbé de Périgord, soon to become Bishop of Autun, and already preparing to play the role of Judas in the First Order of the Church.

"It was then that Weishaupt's Areopagus decided that France would be illuminated, and that it was through France that the great work would begin... "1

So much for Mirabeau's capture by the Wilhemsbad conspirators. As for the influence on him of the salon of the famous Berlin Jewess, the German Israelite historian Graetz, well placed to know the truth, reveals the following:

"At that time, Berlin was full of the young and beautiful Henriette de Lemos, wife of Dr. Herz, as remarkable for her wit as for her beauty. Members of elegant circles flocked to her salon. Diplomats met there: among them Mirabeau, in whose head the storm clouds of the Revolution were already gathering, and for whom Jews still hold a deep gratitude. During his secret diplomatic mission to Berlin (178G), Mirabeau was a regular guest at this residence... It was not long before the ladies of the highest society made no bones about getting in touch with Henriette Herz, and her circle of young Jewish women, attracted as they were by the charm of their seductive conversation. We treated each other almost as equals. Among these young Jewish women were Mendelssohn's daughters... "2

This salon came to a sad end. The Israelite historian admits that "it became a sort of slow Madianite".3

It was in this salon that Mirabeau befriended Dohm,¹ the author of the book *Reforming the Political Situation of the Jews*; in this salon that he was made aware of the life and great qualities of Mendelssohn, who had just died, and that Mendelssohn's disciples, sensing the powerful orator and seeing him as their master's heir,

“urged him to raise his thunderous voice in favor of the oppressed Jews “2.

For his part, Mirabeau “with his keen intelligence immediately understood the scope of the reform inaugurated by Mendelssohn. An economist, if not a thrifty one, by heredity, a philanthropist by fashion, a politician and a patriot by race, he foresaw the advantage that France could draw from all these pale Hebrews, once they were reassembled, as the Prince de Ligne used to say.³” The Jewish cause had entered his heart. The Jewish cause had entered his heart, at Henriette Herz’s salon; in his mind, reading Mendelssohn’s works: he was only waiting for the opportunity to show his devotion.⁴

He is therefore, we repeat, the receptacle and organ of the great storm that has long been brewing. His youth was stormy. His vast chest contains breaths of extraordinary power. He spent time in London, he came to Berlin, the two places where storms form. On him, the conspirators of the Wilhemsbad convent concentrated their sights. Before him the Jewish cause stood suppliant, personified in an old man and a young woman. This man’s head is a volcano. At the French rostrum he will be magnificent and terrible; and, when he utters his famous phrase: *la Révolution fera le tour du monde*, he may remember that in Germany he met the man who has long been accustomed to making this tour, the *Juif-Errant*. He’ll have put his hand in his!

SUMMARY OF THE TWO SECTIONS

CHAPTER VIII

A SOLEMN AND FORMIDABLE DILEMMA

FACING SOCIETY IN THE LATE XVI II' CENTURY

I

Recapitulation of previous chapters. How the Christian breath inspires, after having prepared it, a considerable improvement in the lot of the Jews.

“Do we want to form an exact idea of an era? You have to transport yourself into that era, make an effort of imagination, in order to live there, so to speak. It's not enough to hear about events, you have to witness them, become one of the spectators, one of the actors, if possible; you have to evoke generations from the grave, make them act before your eyes. People will say that this is a difficult thing to do: I agree, but it's a necessary thing to do. “1

We have endeavored to follow this rule, so wise in history, with rigor and patience, and we have associated our reader with it, so as to be able to judge with certainty one of the most serious questions of modern times: Jewish emancipation and its consequences. With the help of unpublished or little-studied documents, we have reconstructed the historical background to this serious issue.

It is necessary to summarize this historical background as follows; this will be the view from the top of the mountain, after a walk along many different paths.

At the end of the eighteenth century, a vehement, irresistible breath of humanity stirred and shook the Jewish communities themselves, inviting the Jews to join the common life, the social life.

This breath of humanity, one and simple in appearance, arrives from two shores: from the Gospel taught by the Church, and it is called the Christian breath; from Lutheran philosophism, and it is the philosophical and philanthropic breath.

1° The Christian breath.

If we follow its inspirations, we will proceed as follows in the

emancipation or at least the improvement of the lot of the Jews:2

Whereas an insurmountable antagonism of doctrines and even morals exists between the Jews of the Talmud and the Christian populations;

Whereas the Sovereign Pontiffs, the Holy Councils and the most Christian kings have constantly taken the most attentive precautions, and have unceasingly renewed the wisest regulations, to prevent the Jews from voluntarily or involuntarily causing damage to Christianity or the Christian republic;

Whereas the Christian nations, as long as they have listened to their holy mother Church, have been well served by these precautions and regulations;

On the other hand :

Whereas the Jews were once the people of God, they gave birth, according to the flesh, to the Savior of the world, and their remains are still dear to God and held in reserve for purposes of mercy;

Whereas the Sovereign Pontiffs and Bishops sc have shown themselves to be their constant protectors, either to ensure respect for their freedom of conscience and the exercise of their worship, or to rescue them from cruelties and save their lives, or to draw them into the arms of divine mercy;

The times of great mercy seem to be at hand,

The Nations, having reached the full possession of their reflection, their strength and their free will, will adopt the following resolutions with regard to the Jews, if they are willing to continue to be inspired by the Christian breath and to show deference to their holy mother and educator, the Church:

1° They will grant the poor Jews a wider participation in social life; they will allow them all possible kinds of industry, and will call them even to civil employments which do not touch the essence of Christian society.

But 2° the Nations will continue to carefully exclude from Jewish action everything that forms the essence of Christian society, and everything that implies in a public function the obligatory manifestation of a Christian conscience. Acting in this way will not mean harshness, since they will be protected in every way, nor exclusion,

since they will be granted everything that can be granted to them civilly, but it will mean the preservation and salvation of Christian society.

This is how we will proceed, if we wish to follow the inspirations of the Christian breath.

II

How philosophical and philanthropic inspiration claims to achieve it.

In its turn, the philosophical and philanthropic breath, claiming the title of liberator of all the oppressed, posits deliverance in these terms:

The Jews are usurers, leeches on the veins of the people; I had looked upon them as such, with Luther, with Voltaire; but today, I, philosopher and philanthropist, change my mind:

They're men.

I want to remake a society where they will be considered as men, and then they will behave like men.

In this society, they will meet with Lutherans, Calvinists, Socinians, Catholics, Deists and so on. Everyone is free to think in religion as he or she pleases; these qualifiers are social superfetations, which I take no notice of.

The title of man, that's what moves me, that's my starting point for starting society again, and my means of bringing together, after so many fruitless attempts, the glorious and dear children of humanity.

As for another world, I'm not concerned with it. I stick to humanity. Doesn't humanity have enough to do at home, without wasting its time and energy in the pursuit of chimerical worlds?

As for Jesus Christ - who is said to have been a God-man - I doubt it very much, and what's better, I don't know anything about it. Consequently, I don't have to worry about his death, which took place eighteen centuries ago. If the Jews were wrong to crucify him, that was their business at the time. It no longer concerns me. Today, it's none of the Jews' business either.

I take the Jews as they are today, not as they were two thousand years ago. I call them to me, because they are men.

To me, all men, to reach out to one another, to help one another, and at last to form humanity!

This is the society that will rise from my breath, the great society, liberating and universal, longed for and awaited!

I say awaited, because in founding it, I, philosophy and philan-

thropy, am fulfilling the aspirations of all the oppressed, and taking into account the efforts of all centuries towards freedom. Luther is with me, Descartes is with me, Voltaire is with me, Rousseau is with me. The whole encyclopedic school is with me. Even the great, the princes and the heads of state are with me: for I am the echo of the French salons; Frederick of Prussia and Emperor Joseph II encourage me; and countless secret societies are the hatching, in a thousand places around the globe, of the need that is being felt for my principles.

To me, then, and to me alone, must belong the leadership of the remancipation of the Jews, as of everything else! It was I who said to Lessing, to Mendelssohn, to Dohm, to Cerfbeer, to the most intelligent of this fearful race: Forward!

III

Dilemma: either the emancipation of the Jews will be undertaken and led by the Christian breath, and it will be a guarantee and a hope for the beautiful Christian civilization; or the philosophical breath will become its agent, and it will be an increase in the storm and the most fearsome unknown.

These are, in the presence of each other, two rival ways of improving the lot of the Jews: one, from the Christian breath; the other, from the philosophical and philanthropic breath. New legislation concerning the Jews is bound to emerge. But how different this legislation will be, depending on whether it is inspired by one or the other of the two breaths! Indeed, a chasm separates the two ways of proceeding:

One is respect for the supernatural, the other is its denial and insult.

One takes Jesus Christ into account, while wishing to do good to the Jews; the other suppresses him.

One takes into account not only Catholicism, but Mosaicism, and all the interventions of the Divinity in the world; the other ignores all the great laws given to the world by divine Wisdom: solidarity, the reversibility of merits and punishments, and drives God back to the frontiers of humanity, saying to him: I'll take care of myself, you take care and stay at home!

Lastly, one is concerned about the disposition of the Jews towards the Nations, and the serious consequences that the civil and legal introduction of the Jews into their midst could have for the Christian Nations. The other is not concerned, and sacrifices the Nations to the abstract idea of humanity.

It is therefore, as is easy to deduce, a solemn alternative, a formidable dilemma which is posed and imposed on society: either the emancipation of the Jews will be undertaken and led by the Christian breath, and this will be a guarantee and a hope for the preservation and development of Christian civilization; or the philosophical and philanthropic breath will take hold of the emancipation and lead it, and this will be an aggravation of the storm and the most formidable

unknown for kingdoms and society. For Christianity, according to a remark full of truth, has become g the very law of life. No "society has perished, no royal race has died out, no power has passed away, but for having violated the law of life contained in Christianity. 1 Woe betide the Christian nations, if they are made to violate the law of life by rejecting Christianity, at a time when, on the other hand, civil life is about to be restored to the Jewish race!

Let the reader now judge whether we were wrong to call the breath of philosophism a storm.

There is a famous figurative description in the Bible of these two winds that will battle over modern society:

The prophet Elijah had been driven by the Spirit of God to Mount Horeb, to the very place where the Lord had appeared and spoken to Moses. Elijah had withdrawn into a cave. A voice said to him: 'Come out of the cave, the Lord is passing by.

"And behold," says the Bible, "before the Lord, to go before him, there was first a violent and impetuous wind, capable of overturning mountains and breaking rocks: and the Lord was not in that wind;

"After the wind came an earthquake, and the Lord was not in it;

"After the earthquake, a fire was kindled: and the Lord was not yet in that fire;

"After the fire came the sound of a light wind, a gentle zephyr. As soon as Elijah heard it, he covered his face with his cloak, and went out and stood at the entrance to the cave." The Lord had passed into the gentle zephyr.¹

This figurative scene is a wonderful teaching! It expresses the way in which the Lord was to proceed under the centuries of the New Covenant:

The birth of the Saviour of the world in Bethlehem came about like a gentle zephyr, kind and insinuating, bringing with it, for souls and peoples, refreshment and calm;

And since then, the Christian breath, continuing the zephyr of Bethlehem, has been a peaceful and invigorating breath, a spirit of clemency and love. It is this spirit which, without breaking or overturning anything, has transformed a hundred diverse peoples and made them into Christian society; and it is this spirit which, at the

end of the eighteenth century, is preparing to improve the lot of the Jews, but without compromising anything in established society. Yes, indeed, this breath is the same light wind before which the prophet covered his face with his cloak out of respect: the Lord is there!

On the contrary, the impetuous violence, the trembling, the fire, are found in the orbs of the breath of philosophism; it announces the Revolution: the Lord is not there!

BOOK FOUR
LOUIS XVI STUDIES THE PROJECT TO EMANCIPATE
THE ISRAELITES
HOW THEY WERE TO ENTER SOCIETY

CHAPTER ONE

CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTIES IN EMANCIPATING
THE ISRAELITES

I

The meaning of Israelite emancipation: religious significance, political significance.

It is remarkable that mankind's oldest people, four thousand years old, has always been treated like a real child: a child brought up for two thousand years; then, a child in penitence and sequestration, for almost another two thousand years.

By the time he inhabited Palestine, the Jewish people had been raised. Their Law served as their teacher. This is what St. Paul said, in a magnificent stroke of light: We were under the care of the Law, which kept us enclosed... The Law served as our pedagogue, to lead us to Jesus Christ.¹ Indeed, the Mosaic Law taught the first elements of piety and the rudiments of true religion, and because children are especially struck by images and figures, the Mosaic Law was full of them. Under his austere supervision (this is the law of fear), the Jewish people, fearful as they are in childhood, were guarded against the crude outbursts of the passions; their faults were severely reproved and punished; and, as with children, there were also temporal rewards for them. Between him and the idolatrous nations, his austere guardian forbade any family relations. In truth, this was a time of pedagogy. Israel is brought up severely, but as a son of a noble race, in a princely manner; Providence prepares him in this way for the preceptorship of Christ, for his divine teachings, for the Christian period. A careful study of the ancient Law cannot fail to reveal this supervisory, pedagogical character.²

Christ presents himself. But because the pedagogue was unable to overcome his pupil's vices and faults, he failed to recognize the divine Messiah, and became stubborn and cruel. When, in the days following Good Friday, the Prince of the Apostles harangued the

crowd: O Israelites, you have renounced the Holy and Righteous One, and asked to be pardoned for a murderer (Barrabas); you have put to death the author of life. However, my brothers, I know that you acted in this out of ignorance, as did your leaders¹: Is it not obvious that by this manner of speaking apostolic charity sought to bring the people back, as one brings back a child, by mitigating their fault and attributing it to ignorance?

Supervision under the pedagogue then became punishment and sequestration. This, alas, has been the fate of the Jewish people for nearly two thousand years. They have remained stubborn and hardened, and their hardening is expressed in the Talmud. It took an aversion to the Nations that had inherited its privileges, and its aversion, combined with spite and a childish attachment to outdated observances, translated into a decision to live apart. But since, even in their separation, these people became dangerous, Christian governments, in concert with the Church, had to transform their separation into sequestration; hence the Ghetto, the Jewries.

What a contrast with the state of freedom in which the Christian people lived! freedom of mind; freedom of heart; ever-increasing civil liberty: so many forms of freedom, due to the sap of love or charity circulating under Christian law.

This is how things were until the end of the last century.

At that point, emancipation was proposed to the Jewish people. This emancipation comes to say to them: "Your time of penance and sequestration is coming to an end. You have had to reflect and correct the vices for which you were reproached. Make your entry into society, sit among us, enjoy the benefits of our laws."

But for its part, poor Israel is not yet what it seems. Providence seems to want to prepare it for this, since it allows the project of emancipation. But at the very moment when the decision is made to emancipate him, he does not yet have the wisdom that would be so necessary. He has not recognized his crime. His obstinacy has hardly diminished. He only half consents to deal with the Nations. His pernicious Talmud remains hidden in his clothes!

Hence the difficulties we foresee, and the precautions the legislator will have to take.

This is what the emancipation of the Israelites meant from a religious and providential point of view.

But let's speak in language less related to the providential plan, and more related to civil law:

Considered more specifically from a civil and political point of view, the emancipation of the Israelites was: their initiation and participation in the exercise of common law. We're going to say to men who have been excluded from society for eighteen centuries - excluded from the streets and homes, excluded from civil office, excluded from the army, excluded from meetings, excluded from public celebrations or misfortunes, excluded from everything - we're going to say to them: "You are free; you can live among us wherever you please, take part in our affairs, in our projects, aspire to all jobs; for you as for us, common law! You are our brothers, you are citizens.

It was, admittedly, a very big undertaking.

It presented considerable difficulties for both Christians and Israelis. The following simple statement, which summarizes many of the volumes published on the subject at the end of the last century, will serve as an illustration.

II

Difficulties of the undertaking. Peril to the Nation that would emancipate them. Since the Jews were a separate and impenetrable nation, to emancipate them would be to introduce an armed nation into a disarmed and trusting one.

The first difficulty that presented itself to all minds was the danger that both the nation that would admit them as citizens, and society itself, might run.

Indeed, the following reflections were made:

The Jews have always wanted to form a separate and impenetrable nation. Without doubt, the other nations have rejected them from their organization and from their midst; but this is because they were the first to never agree to merge with the other nations. History shows them constantly tending, with all their efforts, towards isolation. What they have always wanted, and what they have often obtained, is to form a nation apart; and when they have enjoyed the favor of sovereigns, they have taken advantage of it to demand, not civil equality, but a particular constitution, under special magistrates.

What can we expect from this state of a nation apart, if not that emancipating them and making them citizens in France or elsewhere will mean introducing a nation within a nation, an armed nation within a disarmed and trusting nation?

The nation that has adopted them as its children may change, but they will not.

For eighteen centuries, the Jewish nation, which lives scattered two thousand leagues from Zion, has not crossed its race, and remains, though vagabond by its subjects, immobile amid the waves of succeeding peoples, like a rock in the bosom of the Ocean.

A Jew born in Germany doesn't just call himself a German, he calls himself a German Jew. The German word is never just an epithet: A Jew born in France doesn't just call himself French, he calls himself a French Jew" The French word is still just an epithet. Why is this? Because their true homeland is not on the banks of the Mein or the Seine, it's still on the banks of the Jordan.

If, then, this nation remains distinct, incommunicable, is it jus-

tified in claiming communion with their social prerogatives from the other nations, when it has a reservation, an ulterior motive, an ulterior project?

All that can be claimed in favor of the Jews, emancipated and welcomed as citizens, is that they will defend their new homelands while awaiting their own Liberator, their Messiah. But then again, isn't that a danger? Doesn't this expectation of a Liberator already foretell that they will not love their current homeland as a true citizen should?

Such were the thoughts and fears raised in many minds by the idea of removing social barriers on the Jewish side, and bringing them into the common law.

One historian concluded: "If humanity commands me to open my door to the unfortunate traveler who asks me for hospitality, prudence commands me to take precautionary measures against the unknown. In affairs of state, we don't move that fast..."

The protectors of the Jews and their more sympathetic supporters shared these fears to some extent. But they reassured themselves by saying: Even if they enjoy common law and all the benefits of citizenship, they will always remain, as a people, without a scepter and without an altar.¹ "Without an altar: for in granting the Jews freedom of conscience, we will not be giving them back the Temple of Jerusalem. Without a scepter, of course: for we will not see Jews wearing the diadem; and by granting them a land of Gessen, we will not choose our Pharaohs from among them!"¹

When we later examine the consequences of emancipation as we now see them, it will be appropriate to return to these words spoken in 1788.

III

Difficulties from the point of view of prejudice. Prejudices that existed on the Christian side: 1° Aren't Jews condemned to be unhappy until the end of the world, so why emancipate them? 2° Aren't they inferior beings? emancipating them won't ennoble them. 3° Can they have anything other than aversion in their hearts for other men? emancipating them won't give free and dangerous rein to this aversion?

The second difficulty arose from prejudice.

Prejudice, always terrible when rooted by time and fortified by example, was arming itself with all its might to repel emancipation, both in the name of the Jews themselves and in the name of the Christians. Emancipation was feared on both sides.

Let's examine the Christian prejudices first:

First prejudice. - Jews are condemned to be miserable until the end of the world.

By being miserable, wandering, rejected by the peoples, they serve as witnesses to God's justice. And they must remain wandering and miserable as long as this divine justice is not satisfied.²

This was the oldest prejudice, and, it must be admitted, it was based on good reasons.

But who can fail to see how unfavorable it was to emancipation? Emancipate this people, but wouldn't that be going against God's plans? By becoming citizens, the Jews cease to be wanderers. By becoming citizens, they cease to be miserable. Emancipation will bring them rest, honor, consideration and enjoyment. But won't this be a challenge to Providence, which wants them to remain wandering, miserable and scattered until the day of their conversion? By emancipating them, will we not be renewing Julian's sacrilegious project, who tried to deny the Divinity by attempting to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem?

Second prejudice. - The Jew is an inferior being.

For many centuries, this unfortunate creature had been so debased, that his whole person presented the aspect of an inferior being. The name "Jew" summed up all possible contempt and abjection.

With emancipation, this low status of the Jew would suddenly cease. It would no longer be permissible to regard him as a degraded being, to treat him as an inferior being. Under civil law, there would no longer be any distinction between a Jew and a Christian, between a gentleman from France and a junk dealer from Judea. It's easy to understand how much Christian and French pride would revolt at the thought of this prospect.

The feeling of the Jew's inferiority was so deeply accepted that Alsatian legislation included a humiliating custom known as "*retrait de préférence*" (preferential withdrawal). We have already explained, in chapter 1, what this custom consisted of: "If any Jew in Alsace acquired an asylum, a job, etc., a Catholic could, by the sole right of option, exercise against him a withdrawal, called *retrait de préférence*. "1 Now, once emancipation had been decreed, once common law had been extended to Jewish communities, there was no longer any need to think about repelling such competitors. One could no longer say: "Jew, withdraw!

In a word, emancipating this race meant announcing to the old French populations that the Jew had become a man like any other man, that we had to reach out to him and grant him common law everywhere.

Third prejudice. - Jews can only have aversion in their hearts for other men.

Unfortunately, there are many infamous examples of the tenacity of this prejudice. For example:

It was known that, in hatred of Christianity, they had been known, in certain localities, to appear in public with pomp on Good Friday; and that, to shield them from popular exasperation, they had been forbidden to leave their homes on that day;²

The crime of the outraged or pierced Holy Hosts was on everyone's mind;³

The Talmud was also full of detestable maxims, such as that a Jew should greet a Christian with a curse, and wish him a safe journey by adding in his heart "like Pharaoh's in the sea, or Aman's on the gallows";

And then, was it not a persuasion, confirmed time and again,

that when one of their number succeeded in deceiving a Christian, in selling him at a higher price, he was congratulated by his community as a good deed?

And many other signs of aversion!

All this was notorious, all this had become widespread. What had perhaps only been the fault of a certain number of Jews, was now attributed to the whole race. And so, faced with the idea of a general emancipation, we naturally had to ask ourselves anxiously: "But won't their aversion to us find free rein?"

Who could guarantee that faith would not be in danger? that holy things would not be more frequently profaned? that blasphemy would not become more daring? that public probity would not be compromised? that the notion of right would not weaken, and that impiety, which was beginning to become public and reigning, would not find its most powerful support in Judaic aversion?

As a historian, we report faithfully. You can read about the fears inspired by Judaic wickedness in the book that appeared in Alsace in 1790, with the title: *Les Juifs doivent-ils être admis au titre de citoyens actifs ?* Read and judge.¹

Such were the prejudices, and such were the reasons, on the Christian side, for fearing the emancipation of the Israelites.

But the Israelites, as we said, were no less apprehensive. Here, in fact, are the prejudices that prevailed on their side too.

IV

The prejudices on the Jewish side were as follows: if you became a citizen, would you not be accepting duties? Wouldn't it also mean ceasing to be good Jews?

Mixing with the Nations, with what they called the foreigners, the uncircumcised, seemed to many of them an undertaking full of uncertainties, full of difficulties, full of dangers. They had mountains of prejudice. For them, prejudice stemmed above all from a double disposition of the soul: the habit of misfortune, and the fear of losing their religion.

The habit of misfortune. It makes one timid, even in the face of blessings. The unfortunate whose intelligence has been narrowed by oppression and degradation always suspects hidden traps. It's part of being a slave to be suspicious. Such was the attitude of the Israelites at first to the freedom presented to them. They saw it as fraught with danger. Unlike many modern liberals, who worry only about their rights without the slightest concern for their duties, the Israelites saw only the duties they would have to fulfill, without realizing the rights they would obtain. They were terrified, for example, of the obligation of military service. This one said it best: "That the most odious thing about oppression is precisely that it makes you lose the notion of freedom. Unaccustomed to freedom for so many centuries, it was bound to happen that many old Jews would look askance at it when it appeared, recognizing very few of its charms.

The reader would be wrong to believe that most Jews at the end of the last century were asking to participate in common law. History formally attests to the contrary. Living in their Jewries under an exceptional regime, they had their own laws, customs and privileges, and were quite content with this special situation. They had only one ambition: to be granted more franchises for their trade, and to be allowed to own property by acquiring land. Their social exclusion deprived them of all rights, but also exempted them from most duties. This is what appealed to many.

The habit of misfortune made them fear emancipation from another point of view. If the Jews had often been a nuisance to

Christian populations, it must also be recognized that they too had suffered a great deal in the midst of these populations. What outrages, what vexations! The memory of so many outrages and vexations was deeply rooted in their hearts. The result was a kind of native timidity, visible in a fearful countenance. And this timidity, far from disappearing in the face of the emancipation project, was to find a pretext to increase, at the thought that, through this emancipation, they were going to be mixed up and lost, as it were, in a crowd, from whose bosom so much malevolence had sprung. It's not hard to imagine that many of them must have longed for the separation that was about to come to an end, for the Jewry, for the narrow, smoky neighborhood where everyone was together: we were all on top of each other, but we touched, consoled and supported each other! A lawyer of the time, who had a kind word for them, gave us this impression:

"Surrendered to a blind and foolish superstition, isolated by barriers made precious to them by the sense of their weakness, they cherish these barriers all the more, as they are constantly occupied with the idea that our first care is to seek to abuse them, and that our benefits are the most dangerous and the most distrusted. What can we do against such ideas, which are all the more deeply engraved, all the more difficult to overcome, because habit and misfortune have made them a feeling based on a disastrous experience? "1

The habit of misfortune, then, was the first disposition of their souls, which made them fear and mistrust the enterprise of emancipation. There was another: the fear of losing their religion, or at least of seeing it undermined and shaken.

Let the reader understand the intimate organization of the Jews. This intimate organization was both religious and political. Indeed, Moses, their lawgiver, had not only established a religion, but also a social state. The Pentateuch was both a book of religion and a civil code. The result was that, for the Jews, religion and politics were constantly confused. This state of affairs had continued, and even worsened, since they had been expelled from Jerusalem. Scattered among the nations, they had agglomerated into groups, into communities which, like islands in the midst of Christian states, enjoyed,

as we have already noted, an autonomous constitution and governed themselves according to particular laws. They had their own syndics. The rabbi exercised the power of priest and magistrate. The Jewish communities thus resembled small religious states, underpinned by a kind of political state.

But what would happen to the Jews when, as a result of their call within society, they would no longer have this autonomy? Forced to abandon their narrow particular society in order to enter the great general society – narrow, no doubt, but supported by their religion, the buttress of that religion – would they not, by that very fact, be threatened in their religion? Their kind of political organization within their Jewish communities was the bulwark of their religious organization: to renounce one would be to leave the other in dangerous solitude, to compromise it, to expose it? Would Moses, if he appeared again, advise the abandonment of the political rampart, leaving only the sanctuary to survive?

Such were the vague forebodings, the secret terrors that seized Jewish souls, especially the rabbis, at the news that their emancipation was being prepared. And those among them who were rooted in Talmudic traditions, the old Jews – and there were many of them in those days! – were worried about whether the youngsters, once they had mingled with society, would remain good Jews. By the very fact of being isolated and compact, they kept an eye on each other. But, once mixed with the Christian crowd, wouldn't many escape both surveillance and religion?

So, if we combine this fear of religious decline with that of the new duties of citizenship that loomed before them like a scarecrow, we are left with the certainty that it was far from certain that the old Jewish heads would enthusiastically welcome the idea of emancipation and common law: the young, the leaders, yes; but the old, no. Historical documents even reveal to us that the Jews, who were the first to embrace the idea of emancipation and common law, were not the first to do so. Historical documents even reveal something rather piquant:

When the question of emancipation was introduced in Louis XVI's council, the rich and happy synagogue of Bordeaux sent a

petition asking not to be included in the new fate of the Jews. "It would be a great service to the Jews of Bordeaux to ask M. de Malesherbes not to include them in any way in the new law he is charged with drafting in favor of the Jews of Alsace and Lorraine.... Any change to their current situation could only be detrimental to their happiness. "1 This was certainly not a very enthusiastic or eager community! It has to be said that Bordeaux's Jewish community enjoyed a privileged position among all the other Jewish communities in France. That's why its members "ardently desired to preserve their privileged position, at most with a few new advantages, but without mixing either with the body of the French nation or with their co-religionists from Alsace and Lorraine".2 This was certainly selfish. But this was proof that the idea of emancipation was far from being greeted with general eagerness. Selfishness, satisfaction with the present, routine, combined with the habit of misfortune and religious apprehensions, made people anxious about any change in a situation that had existed for eighteen centuries.

And so, to sum up the unfavorable impressions on both sides, Christians and Jews alike, it has to be said that, while the Christians dreaded the entry of the Jews into society, the Jews dreaded their fusion with Christian society.

V

Finally, there were difficulties concerning the mode of emancipation. Should emancipation be complete at once, or gradual? Common sense in 1788 called for gradual emancipation.

Assuming that all the preceding difficulties had not existed, or had not been so serious, there was one, however, that we could not avoid encountering, a very serious and crucial one, and one that needed to be resolved: how should we go about emancipating the Jews?

Should they be granted complete and absolute freedom from the outset, or would it be wise to introduce them gradually, degree by degree, into freedom and society? If emancipation were slow, cautious and delayed, would this not expose the Jewish people to the risk of never being emancipated? If, on the contrary, emancipation was abrupt, without transition, without apprenticeship, would this not expose society to suffer from their vices? For these men had contracted many vices, all the vices inherent in misfortune and servitude; and should they be thrown into society abruptly, or should they only be introduced with care? In a word, would emancipation be immediately complete and perfect, without transition or apprenticeship, or would it be gradual, slow and studied? This was the most difficult and delicate aspect of the emancipation project.

Common sense immediately understood that this was the crux of the matter. Denying Jews access to society was hardly possible; ideas of freedom, human dignity and equality had gained too much ground. But wouldn't opening the doors to them with both wings be the opposite of the right thing to do? From the outset, common sense took a stand. It demanded an apprenticeship, degrees and precautions. Its conclusions were as follows:

"That the Jew should be a citizen in all respects in which he will not be a harmful citizen, very good;

"That he be granted all the rights in the exercise of which our laws can monitor his conscience, without distinction, very good;

"For example, that he may live anywhere in the kingdom;

"To vote in the nation's primary assemblies, to elect representatives, and to participate with other citizens in the drafting of in-

struction manuals;

“Hold a place in public and communal deliberations;

“Acquire a house to live in with his family;

“That he may be admitted to all liberal and mechanical arts guilds; trade, farm, cultivate, lease land and even acquire real estate;

“Finally, let him worship freely, as long as he does not disturb the peace;

“All this is possible, even charitable, and must be generously granted to new citizens.

“But under no circumstances should Jews be eligible for political, administrative or judicial bodies. That is to say, he should not be invested with any of those important and delicate foundations over which the principles of Christian morality must always preside. “1

From the point of view of Christian principles and morality, common sense called for limits, or at least degrees of training, in the exercise of common law that was to be granted to the Jews. But it also demanded them from the point of view of national prosperity and independence, which seemed threatened if Jews became unrestricted citizens. Here is the astonishing prediction made in 1788:

“Unlimited enjoyment of all the rights of citizenship would put the advantages of the Jew’s condition above that of any other Frenchman. For, on the one hand, he would reap *Fo?* in abundance; and, on the other hand, this gold, placing in his chains a great number of slaves, whose suffrages he would direct in the assemblies, would serve him as an instrument to rise to the chair of the President of the Nation, or to place himself on the */leurs de lis*... “2

We’ll return to these fears and predictions in a later section of this book. At the time they were formulated, in 1788, they seemed somewhat exaggerated; the Jewish people then counted for so little, for nothing, civilly. So, in order to calm the people’s secret anxiety, one of Israel’s most ardent supporters responded to these fears with the reassuring challenge we quoted earlier: “No Jew will be seen wearing the diadem! Nevertheless, these apprehensions and perplexities were at least a warning, a call to prudence; they indicated the wisdom and circumspection with which the government taking up the cause of Jewish emancipation should proceed. We shall see

which was wise and circumspect, and which was imprudent: Louis XVI or the Revolution.

To sum up, this chapter, in which we have grouped all the difficulties as if in a synoptic table, shows the reader just how complicated, obscure, delicate and threatening the emancipation of the Jewish people was. No one is unaware that the exit from the Egyptian captivity, while this people was still in its infancy, presented many complications: but complications, in our opinion, less numerous and less difficult than those which arose in the eighteenth century of the Christian era, when this same people, after an existence of four thousand years and a new captivity of almost two thousand, was finally going to emerge from its Jewishness, its sequestration and its providential reserve.

CHAPTER II

THE LAND OF EMANCIPATION

I

Providence's careful handling of the vicissitudes of the Jewish people. It is not by chance that a country is chosen to become the starting point for the emancipation of this people throughout the world.

God's gifts are without repentance. Though rejected, the Jewish people never ceased to be the object of special divine protection. It seems that over these eighteen centuries, Providence has acted towards them like a mother secretly sending help to a guilty son whom paternal justice has banished and kept away. Pascal, considering this people, said: "It attracts my attention by many admirable and singular things... Among other singularities, they are a people composed entirely of brothers. This is unique. And again: "This people is not only considerable in its antiquity; it is also singular in its duration, which has always continued from its origin until now... "1 These singularities, which astonished Pascal, are nothing other than an attestation of God's non-repentance towards the people who have borne his name; they are the help given in secret to a guilty son, but always loved.

The singularities that will emerge in the emancipation or entry of the Jews into the society of modern Nations are no less astonishing.

First and foremost, it was not by chance that a country was chosen as the starting point for this emancipation. Which country will it be? Surely God will choose it with the same care he took in choosing Cyrus, in choosing Rome, when he wanted to either deliver or punish his people.

Remarkably, more than 150 years before his birth, Cyrus, the great deliverer who put an end to the captivity of God's people in Babylon, was announced by name; God had him named by Isaiah: It is I who say to the deep (to the Euphrates): I who say to Cyrus: You are the shepherd of my flock, and you shall do my will in all things.²

Likewise, 1451 years before he swooped down on Jerusalem like an eagle to destroy it from top to bottom, the Roman people were designated by Balaam: They shall come from Italy on three-oared galleys; they shall reduce the Hebrews to the most dreadful desolation.¹

Cyrus chosen and appointed 150 years before he was born to lead Israel out of Babylonian captivity; the Roman legions appointed 1451 years before they came to punish the deicide: isn't this remarkable? isn't it proof of a particular providence in the vicissitudes of this people? The time has come to bring them into the common life and society of the Nations, and to bring down the wall of separation once and for all. Such a momentous event cannot be accomplished without a country specially chosen by Providence, and in some way predestined for this great work.

What is this country?

II

Choosing this country: France. From a religious point of view, the choice of France completes the mysterious harmonies that God has established between France and Judea.

It is France.

When we study France and Judea and compare them with each other, we are struck by the singular and mysterious harmonies that God was pleased to establish between the two countries.

The Promised Land and the Land of France!

Both the most happily situated, and both the most beautiful regions that the sun illuminates in its course.

Both centers of the world and of the life of nations, one in ancient times, the other in new.

Both presenting to the gaze of history the two most august families of kings who have ever reigned: here David and his descendants; there Clovis, Charlemagne, Saint Louis and their descendants.

Both the land of lilies: the lily of Jesse and the lily of France.

Both the land of Mary: one as her homeland, the other as her kingdom.

Both inhabited by two peoples superior to all others in gifts of spirit and qualities of heart.

And both adorned with the same motto: for Judea's motto was this: *Digitus Dei est hic*, in what happens to me, it's the finger of God. And the motto of France reads: *Gesta Dei per Francos*, the gestures of God by the Franks.

Such was the Promised Land, and such is the land of France.

If we turn from the physiognomy of the two lands and peoples to their history, the similarities are no less astonishing. To Judea belongs the honor of having prepared the advent of the Messiah and of having carried his cradle; to France belongs that of having extended his reign and protected his Church. Along with Rome, they are the only two nations to have had the glorious role of being entrusted with the universal, i.e. the interests of humanity: the Jewish nation, through the Messiah it presented to the whole world; the French nation, through its action in the service of the Catholic

and Roman Church.

Also, in the episodes of war between the two peoples, at the moment of peril, the same extraordinary help was sent to them: women liberators. Deborah, Judith, Esther, appeared among the people of Israel; Clotilde, Geneviève, Joan of Arc, appeared among the people of France. No other people has had such a warrior phalanx. Only in Judea and France has God sent these heroines, strong and beautiful creatures!

The resemblance is so striking, alas, that it can be found even in our faults. If Israel erected the Cross on Golgotha, the people of France had to erect the scaffold of Louis XVI and seat a courtesan on the altars of the God of love...

Now, in the presence of such a perfect similarity of qualities, gifts, gestures and tendencies, how can we be surprised, indeed, how can we fail to admire, that the country of France has been chosen to become the promoter of Israel's emancipation? Is this not the complement, the crowning achievement of previous harmonies? The phase of reconciliation between Israel and the rest of the world is destined to arrive. So, when we see the people of France, so providentially similar to those of Judea, taking up the cause of Jewish emancipation, we instinctively say to ourselves: It's a brother seeking out his brother, to bring him back into the bosom of the family! Undoubtedly, the fraternal embrace will only take place, sincere and moving, within the Church; it is the Church that will draw Israel and other peoples into its arms, to reconcile them definitively; but Providence makes use of secondary causes; and noble France will have been chosen to prepare the reconciliation!

III

From a political point of view, France is the only nation capable of taking up the cause of Israelite emancipation.

Political considerations must be added to religious ones. Politically speaking, the cause of Jewish emancipation also required France as a starting point.

The French nation has been singled out for well-deserved praise: "There are undertakings that only France is in a position to accomplish, magnanimous resolutions that only she dares to conceive. Only she can, on a given day, take the common cause into her own hands and fight for it. 1 Jewish emancipation was one of those undertakings that succeed only through magnanimous resolve, and so it was to France that the sons of Israel, scattered across the globe, instinctively turned their gaze at the end of the eighteenth century. Since leaving Palestine, they had been looking to the East; now they were looking to France!

England had been the first to try and emancipate them, but had failed. In 1755, under the reign of George II, a first attempt was made to emancipate the Jews in England; the Pelham ministry passed a bill allowing Parliament to naturalize Jews who had been established in the country for three years; but the jealous opposition of the London trade and the clamor of the populace led to the repeal of this law the following year. "1 What, then, did England lack for this success? A quality that distinguishes France: magnanimity and self-forgiveness. In the cold regions it inhabits, England is the head of the political world, of which France is the heart. England calculates for herself; France resolves and dares for others.

Had it been entrusted to other European nations, the cause of Jewish emancipation would probably not have had a better chance of success. It would not, perhaps, have come up against cold calculations as in England, but against other obstacles and inconveniences.

Spain, for example. Didn't it have the disadvantage of memories of the Inquisition? The Jews have never forgotten the gloomy day in 1492, when all those of their number who lived in Spain were forced together, men, women, children and the elderly, unarmed and

defenseless, to flee from all parts of the kingdom and take the road of exile, having no other refuge than that which fate would offer them. I have seen," says one historian, "Jews give up a house for a donkey, and a vineyard for a bit of cloth; others swallowed their gold to take it away. The Jews never forgot that terrible year. In fact, since then, none of them has lived on Spanish soil. The cause of Jewish emancipation could therefore not be proposed to Spain.

But what about Italy?

Italy is the stronghold of past institutions. The Papacy, in its prudence, neither calls for nor creates events; it receives them from the hand of God, who produces or permits them, confining itself, when they are accomplished, to behaving towards them according to the ordinary rules of Christian wisdom.

But couldn't Germany and Austria have been chosen for the work of mercy?

In these two countries, the number of Jews was several million. The emancipation of this number would have been frightening.

France alone had none of these disadvantages.

Its previous severity towards the Israelites had not been as excessive as that of Spain;

Their numbers, which numbered several million in the German lands, were scarcely a hundred thousand in her bosom;

If she decided to take up their cause, she would certainly not abandon it along the way, as England had done;

After all, was it not she who, while Rome and Italy were passive in the face of events, had many times been charged by Providence with creating them?

The emancipation of the Jews thus found a favorable environment in France. If it is true that nations, like individuals, each have their angel, it was to the angel of France that it was said in heaven: O France, become, for the remnants of Israel, the starting point of mercy!

IV

But if France has aptitudes that other nations do not have for the success of this work of mercy, it is, on the other hand, the most exposed to lightly solving the problem of the difficulties enumerated in the previous chapter. There is only one way out of this peril: the King's vision and guidance.

The most beautiful things on earth have their shadows, and the most perfect beings, their weaknesses.

If it was to the advantage of the Israelites that France should take the initiative in their emancipation, it must be recognized that, notwithstanding its status as the eldest daughter of the Church, the French nation was not the most capable of coping with the difficulties of the undertaking without peril, and that, consequently, there was reason to tremble for the interests of the Christian people. Isn't this a paradox? Alas, no.

In fact, as we saw in the previous chapter, this issue demanded extraordinary circumspection, scrutiny and skill, so that in wishing to be useful to the Israelites, one was not exposed to harming the Christians. But weren't French haste and lightness precisely the opposite of what was required? Here was the ardor of a Mirabeau preparing and amassing in the shadows in favor of the Israelites: wouldn't a Fabius Cunctator be needed to safeguard the interests of the Christian people? The public mind was worried; it demanded clarification, guarantees, precautions: was France capable of seeking these clarifications, discussing these guarantees, adopting these precautions? Let us answer frankly: Yes, but with the King at its head!

With the King at the helm, France will be able to properly resolve and bring to a successful conclusion the delicate and complex business of emancipating the Jews;

With the King at her head, she will be able to do her share of pity for the dead of the House of Israel, and her share of safeguarding for the living children of the House of God;

But if, unfortunately, France comes to do without a King, the solution will inevitably be quite different; for, alongside the most brilliant qualities, all the faults of the French temperament will concur

in resolving the question; alongside élan, haste; alongside generosity, lightness; alongside magnanimity, improvidence. If any nation needs to be restrained by the monarchy if it is not to err or overshoot the mark, it is France. In his masterly treatise *Politique tirée des propres paroles de l'Écriture sainte*, dedicated to Monseigneur le Dauphin, Bossuet inscribed and developed these chapters: monarchical government is the best; royal authority is paternal; the prince must foresee; he must be attentive; he must consult past times; the prince must study God's law; he is the executor of God's law; he must procure that the people be instructed in God's law; justice is the true character of a king, and it is this that establishes his throne; clemency is the glory of a reign. This eloquently demonstrates that the King of France is truly the father of his family. Heir to the experience of sixteen centuries of monarchy, full of solicitude for his people and for Christianity, he keeps watch, while at the same time knowing how to encourage the forward march. He will encourage the impulses of the modern spirit in its pity for the remnants of Israel, but he will keep these impulses within the bounds of Christian and French interests.

It must therefore be concluded, with regard to the country of emancipation, that no country was better than France as a tribunal for examining the cause of the Israelites, provided that this tribunal had the King as its president.

CHAPTER III

LOUIS XVI ENTRUSTS THE EMANCIPATION PROJECT TO MALESHERBES (1787)

I

Louis XVI's generous initiative: the lilies of France bow to Israel.

One feels a painful tug at the heartstrings when meditating on the contrast provided by history: the lilies of France trampled underfoot in secret societies at the very moment when they bow with commiseration to the remains of Israel.

This emblem of the Christian and French monarchy must have had something extraordinary attached to it for the Masonic sects to have made it the object of their wrath. It was a universally accepted belief in the centuries of faith that fleurs-de-lis fell from heaven at the baptism of Clovis, and that the arms of France, which had previously been emblazoned with foul animals (toads), were then changed by this heavenly gift into flowers which are the most ethereal.¹ This charming flower, whether considered in nature's garden, or on the coat-of-arms of France, expresses purity and frankness.

It's hardly surprising, then, that Masonic hatred, beginning the series of its destructions, first set its sights on it. Three initials were secretly communicated and propagated in lodges towards the end of the last century: L.-. D.-. P.-. These initials mean: Lilia destrue pedibus, leu lis (the Christian monarchies), destroy them by trampling them underfoot.² A Masonic grade was even specially instituted for this purpose: that of Knight of the East; the recipient, girded with a silk scarf dotted with skulls, bones in saltire, and on which are written the three letters L.*. D.'. P.*, is led through a series of apartments, where destruction is simulated, to a final apartment where there is no throne left.¹

And so it goes.

And yet, at the very hour when the lilies are being outraged and condemned in this way, they are inclining with compassion and kindness towards the remnants of Israel!

Providence always does things with a delicacy of proportions as suave as it is perfect. Not only did it choose France, the country most closely related to Judea, as the place and starting point for the emancipation of the Israelites; it also chose as the instrument of the work of mercy the royal family, which bore and recalled in its coat of arms the beautiful flower of Judea.

Indeed, the lily, before becoming, under the Law of Grace, the expression of the Christian and French monarchy, had been, under the Ancient Law, the flower of the Divinity itself. Didn't the Lord designate lilies for the ornamentation of His Temple in Jerusalem?² And didn't Christ, depicting Himself in the graceful language of the Cantique, proclaim: "I am the flower of the field and the lily of the valleys?"¹ By making the lilies fall on the shield of France at the baptism of Clovis, Christ had lent His own flower!

So there was something touching in the choice of the king of France, the monarch of the lilies, to pity the fate of the ancient inhabitants of Judea; the charm increased with a king like Louis XVI!

We have already described how the generous monarch opened his arms to the Israelites. We need only refer to book one: *Bienfaits de Louis XVI à l'égard des israélites, préparation à leur entrée dans la société*.

These benefits were not enough for this prince, of whom it has been said that "he was certainly the best sovereign since Saint Louis". Saint Louis had had to take coercive measures against the Jews; Louis XVI, having opened his arms to them, was about to open the doors of society to them once again.

The difficulties, as we have said, were considerable. Difficulties because of the peril that such an undertaking might bring to society. Difficulties in terms of prejudices: there are prejudices about Jews among Christians; there are prejudices about Christians among Jews. Difficulties, finally, in the mode of emancipation. But no matter! The great soul of Louis XVI did not hesitate. The times were ripe. What's more, the monarch had on hand a minister who would fulfill his heart's desire: Malesherbes!

II

Malesherbes chosen to prepare the emancipation project. Malesherbes is a fine, noble figure, sensitive and moderate. He is, however, one of the falsifiers of philosophism. His regrets. The two parts of his life. His magnanimity.

Louis XVI and Malesherbes! these are the two names, the two intelligences, the two hearts that Providence was pleased to unite, so that together they could work for the emancipation of the people of Israel.

Here is the portrait of Malesherbes, as sketched by the Duc de Lévis and M. de Chateaubriand.

I saw this illustrious old man several times," says the Duc de Lévis, "and I remember his open, calm face, and his somewhat distracted air; his principles were severe, and his society was gentle: an honest magistrate, a tender father, a zealous friend, he enjoyed general esteem and universal benevolence."

M. de Chateaubriand, with whom Malesherbes was related, adds these details: "M. de Malesherbes would have been tall had his thick waist not prevented him from appearing so. What was most astonishing about him was the energy with which he expressed himself in advanced old age. If you saw him sitting without speaking, with his slightly sunken eyes, his thick grizzled eyebrows and his air of kindness, you would have taken him for one of those august figures painted by Lesueur's hand. But if you touched his heartstrings, he would rise like a bolt of lightning; his eyes would instantly open and widen; from the warm words that came out of his mouth, from his expressive and animated air, you would have thought you were looking at a young man in all the effervescence of age; but from his stocky head, from his words, a little confused for lack of teeth to pronounce them, you would have recognized him as a septuagenarian. This contrast redoubled the charms you found in his conversation, just as you love those fires that burn amidst the snow and ice of winter. "1

Such was Malesherbes' physiognomy in private. As for the physiognomy of the public man, it has been summed up in the words:

"Having loved his master, he loved him to the end." His faithfulness will also be recounted¹ to the very end!

Yes, it's fair to say that Malesherbes honored the human race with his high and steadfast virtues, while at the same time making it love him with the charm of his character, he possessed to a high degree that precious virtue: moderation. He was a man apart in the middle of his century. This century, preceded by the greatness of Louis XIV and followed by the crimes of the Revolution, disappears as if crushed between its fathers and its sons. Malesherbes remains standing!

All these eulogistic sentiments are taken from authors who were contemporaries of Malesherbes.² We are happy to record them, as we feel obliged to add that he was one of the proponents of philosophism. Malesherbes is reproached for having given in to the deviations of philosophism, and for having, by this very fact, contributed to the birth and the calamities of the Revolution. Alas, this is all too true. He himself recognized this and condemned himself. We must therefore distinguish between two parts of Malesherbes' life:

The first, in which he is undoubtedly still the admirable and honest magistrate, the tender father, the zealous friend, but also, unfortunately, the friend of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Condorcet, and even their protector;

In the second, a white-haired old man alone with the royal prisoner in the Tour du Temple, he condemned his ideas,¹ his friendships,² and appeared to be a perfect Christian.

One of Louis XVI's rare pleasures was to contribute to this admirable man's return to Christianity. For it was he whom the royal captive commissioned to fetch an unsworn priest to prepare him for the scaffold. In entrusting him with this task, Louis XVI said to him: "My friend, religion consoles quite differently from philosophy. The faithful servant took advantage of his august master's lesson. When he, in turn, climbed onto the tombereau that took him to the place of execution, God allowed a few priests to be at his side, his comforters as well as his admirers. M. de Tocqueville, who married a granddaughter of M. de Malesherbes, recounts that the good and holy old man, on the eve of his death, said to him:

“My good friend, if you have children, raise them to be Christians; that is the only good thing.

To complete our readers’ acquaintance with Malesherbes, and to facilitate the understanding of what follows, we would add that he assisted Louis XVI three times with his advice and services:

The first, at the beginning of the reign, when the King called him to the ministry with Turgot. But when Malesherbes realized that Turgot was about to be dismissed, he himself resigned.

The second time, in 1787. Recalled to the Ministry, he stayed for just one year: a short time, but what a time! unforgettable for the poor Jews, since, as we shall show, it was then that Malesherbes became, for them, the instrument of royal mercy.

Finally, the third time he assisted Louis XVI was in the Temple prison and at the bar of the Convention.¹ One word, which escaped Malesherbes at the time, admirably portrays his magnanimity. When the King was taken to the Convention, M. de Malesherbes spoke to him only as Sire and Your Majesty. Treillard heard him, and exclaimed furiously: “Who makes you so bold as to utter words that the Convention has outlawed? – It’s contempt for life,” replied Malesherbes calmly.

To all these details about the generous and illustrious old man, we’ll add two more, because they’ll be useful to us, a little further on.

On the eve of the day when the King appeared before the Convention to defend himself, he asked his old friend what he, the poor prisoner, could do to reward de Sèze and Tronchet, his two other defenders. I have nothing left,” said the unfortunate monarch, “and if I left them a legacy, it would not be paid. – Sire,” said Malesherbes, “you can give them a reward that will satisfy them. – What’s that?” said the King. – Kiss them,” replied Malesherbes. And the next day, Louis XVI pressed them to his heart, and both burst into tears.

The last Irait: when, a few months later, Malesherbes, in his turn, had to go to his death, he came out of prison, leaning on his daughter, Mme de Rosambo, condemned like him. Just as the lugubrious procession was about to pass through the wicket, Mme de Rosambo caught sight of M “e de Sombreuil, so famous for her

filial piety. Mademoiselle," she said, "you have had the good fortune to save your father's life, and I shall have the good fortune to die with mine.¹

Such was the good and virtuous Malesherbes, the amiable old man, the simple man, as we liked to call him, in his dealings with his King and with his own people.

III

A providential coincidence: Malesherbes pleads the cause of the Israelites, as if to herald the end of the punishment for deicides, and he will plead the cause of Louis XVI, to prevent regicide.

Is it not a touching provision of Providence that the same man who will plead the cause of Louis XVI to prevent regicide has also been charged with pleading the cause of the Israelites, as if to herald the end of the punishment of deicides? The same voice that will be raised to preserve the life of the King of France is the same voice that will be raised to restore the life of the people of Israel!

Malesherbes, in fact, as we said, had first been called to the ministry with Turgot, had left it with Turgot, and had returned to solitude.

Eleven years later, in 1787, he left his beloved solitude to return to business, and it was then that he was commissioned by the King to study the question of the improvement and emancipation of the Jewish people. He providentially came out of retirement in 1787, to prepare the rehabilitation of the Israelites and restore their honor. He would come out a second time in 1792, to support and promote the honor of the King of France.

There really are some coincidences where the finger of God can be seen. This is one of them. There were two such coincidences in the divine decrees concerning the rehabilitation of the old guilty people: one at the beginning of the question, the other at the end; they were not noticed by contemporaries, nor could they have been, because the action was so agitated and turbulent; but they are particularly striking now that everything is over. Of these two coincidences, one is, we say, at the beginning of the question, the other at the end:

At the beginning, that of Malesherbes: the same man who works to bring about an end to the punishment of deicide, also works to prevent the accomplishment of regicide. He is the herald of mercy after the nineteenth-century atonement for the great crime of Calvary, and he does his utmost to prevent the great crime of the Place de la Concorde.

Another coincidence, no less striking, will occur when the question

is raised. When the emancipation begun under Louis XVI received its solution under the Constituent Assembly (1789-1791), a gloomy person would appear at the Assembly's bar, along with the Jews, to demand civil rights: the executioner! Until 1789, this man was in a class of his own, and did not enjoy civil rights like the Jews. He would appear at the same time as them, at the same session, to obtain the same rehabilitation; and the Constituent Assembly would rehabilitate him first...

We'll come back to this strange encounter in due course. For the moment, keeping to Malesherbes, we address serious Christian minds, and ask them: Isn't it laudable, isn't it providential that the same venerable voice that was to plead the cause of Louis XVI, should have been invited by that same Louis XVI to plead the cause of the poor Jews too?

IV

On what occasion Malesherbes was entrusted by the King with the cause of the Israelites. Anecdote of the burial of a poor Jew.

On what occasion was Malesherbes entrusted by the King with this moving and difficult cause?

History provides one fact, legend another.

The historical fact is the conclusion of the piquant debate between the city of Strasbourg and the Israelite Cerfbeer that we recounted in Book 1. The Israelite, rejected by Strasbourg, which absolutely did not want him as a landowner, despite the fact that the King had granted him letters of naturalization, appeared before French society with all his co-religionists to be admitted as citizens; and Malesherbes was appointed by the King to examine the petitioners' request. (See above, pages 157 to 140.)

The legend also has its explanation. The Archives israélites, a collection of modern Jewish annals, recounts, in the form of a short story or anecdote, an extremely touching act of kindness by Louis XVI towards the Israelites of Versailles. There is no historical proof of this. Nevertheless, we thought it would be appropriate to place it among the serious pieces in this work: for, in addition to being a charming story, it introduces Malesherbes to the Jewish question. Let's add that, while the kindness of the story has no supporting evidence, the circumstances that gave rise to it are trustworthy. It concerns the burial of a poor Jew, and it is well known that under the Ancien Régime, Jews were so excluded from the possession of land or the right to own property, that they often found it extremely difficult to obtain a cemetery of their own, in which to deposit their dead'. Here's the anecdote:

It was 1788; on that day, King Louis XVI was in a charming mood as he talked about Versailles for the hunt. The Council of Ministers had dealt with the administration's embarrassments, the Controller General had indicated new financial resources, the Count of Provence had quoted Horace only twice, and the Count of Artois had pointed out no lèse-étiquette. El how could Louis XVI not have forgotten the worries of royalty? He had just spent an hour at Trianon with that

sweet Marie-Antoinette, adorned with the graces of wit and youth; he had strolled bourgeoisly with her under the blossoming linden trees of this miniature Switzerland, chatting good-naturedly about the difficulties he had encountered in a locksmith's job completed that very morning when he rose at the crack of dawn. At that moment, the royal couple's children had been brought to him by the Princesse de Lamballe and the Countess Jules de Polignac; and the Queen, in whom, as in all German hearts, family sentiments dominated, had forgotten that she was the daughter of an empress and the wife of a king, to indulge in the pure joys of wife and mother.

These memories pleasantly caressed the thoughts of the monarch, whose carriage was driving rapidly towards the hunting rendezvous, when, at the bend in an alley of the wood bordering Roquencourt, a certain confusion arose among the bodyguards of the escort, and the royal canopy came to an abrupt halt. Louis XVI put his head in the doorway, and was astonished to see four old men with foreign faces, adorned with long white beards, dressed in grey cloth and carrying on their shoulders a stretcher on which rested a rough wooden coffin, barely covered by a tattered mortuary sheet. Behind the funeral procession marched two young men weeping loudly, their clothes torn in mourning. The procession was closed by a dozen or so individuals of different dress and appearance, but all bearing the oriental features, the elongated nose, the prominent chin, the short, untidy beard; and all of them, with their hats on, walked gravely and confidently, chanting strange words to an unfamiliar tune.

This fantastic apparition disturbed the King, and his first movement was to uncover himself before this modest beer and devoutly make the sign of the cross. Then, turning to M. de Besenval who was beside him in the carriage, he said: "What is this? The captain of the guards, who had overheard this question, respectfully approached the King and said: "Sire, forgive the delay these rascals have caused to Your Majesty's march: I'm laughing at the harsh rebuke to your pikemen for not having gone over these Jews' bellies.

- Jews!" said the astonished King.

- Yes, Sire, for some years now, a colony of these miscreants, from the Messin country and Alsace, has dared to settle in your

good city of Versailles; they deal in gold and silver, old clothes and perfume for the toilet.

- But what are they doing in this wooded area

- That's what I just asked them, and all I understood from their Tudesque jargon was that they don't bury their dead in the Christian cemetery, and as they have neither the means nor the right to have a resting place of their own at Versailles, they are obliged to take their dead to Paris, where they bury them in the cemetery that the Jews own there in the parish of Montrouge.

- Poor people!" said the King thoughtfully, "five leagues to go like that!

At this point, his carriage was quickly driven towards Saint-Germain, where the court was hunting that day, and the funeral procession slowly made its way towards Paris, more concerned with its own grief than with meeting the King of France.

Towards evening, the King was returning to Versailles, and already the imposing château of Louis XIV loomed up on the horizon with its majestic statues, mythological basins and marble apotheoses, when the crowd crowding the avenue opened up to allow the royal procession to pass, a pompous coffin, richly decorated, accompanied by a large procession of priests dressed in their priestly vestments and singing the canticle of the dead, answered by the falsetto of the choirboys and the drone of the bells ringing in full voice. It is," said Besenval to the King, "the funeral of a wealthy drapa merchant in the Rue de la Paroisse... The King made no reply, but returned to the château with a preoccupied air, which neither the Queen's gentle words nor the young Dauphin's caresses could entirely dispel.

All night long, the monarch's sleep was troubled by mournful dreams, and as soon as he rose, he sent for his minister Malesherbes, to whom he recounted the painful reflections he had made the day before while attending, as if led by Providence, two funerals whose contrast was so sharp. Then, as a worthy descendant of Henri IV, he added: "Aren't all French people my children? And must a large proportion of our subjects be subjected to sad exclusions until the moment when they appear before God, who has given kings the mission of representing Him on earth! - It was in this conversation

that the King first spoke of a vast survey to be carried out on the means of energetically improving the political situation of the Jews in France, and said to his minister these beautiful words that history has preserved: "Monsieur de Malesherbes, *cous cous sont fait philosophe, et moi je cous fais juif!* Malesherbes thanked the King, as if it were a favor, that he was willing to associate him with the great act of regeneration that His Majesty was planning for the French Israelites. This virtuous advisor was leaving the King, when Louis XVI called him back and said: By the way, Monsieur de Malesherbes, please write to the provincial intendant, requesting that he give the Jews of our good city of Versailles a plot of land in which to bury their dead. If the city has no free land, let him take one from our own domain, and even if necessary from our royal park!

This act of munificence has been accomplished, and when Israelites from all over the world visit this beautiful Château de Versailles, now invaded by all the glories of France, may they give a pious souvenir to the good King Louis XVI!

This is a charming anecdote. It comes as no surprise from Louis XVI.

Let the reader compare it with the cruel watchword: L.-. D.-. P.-., destroy the lilies by trampling them underfoot.

CHAPTER IV

THE WORK OF MALESHERBES (1788)

I

The initiative for the social rehabilitation of the Jews belonged neither to the Revolution nor to the Empire. It belongs to Christian royalty. Irrefutable evidence: in 1788, a commission of the Council of State was appointed to study the question: the most distinguished Israelites of France appealed to Malesherbes: Malesherbes' memorandum to the King; preparation of an edict.

The King chooses Malesherbes to act as advocate for the poor Jews.

What will Malesherbes do to fulfill the generous monarch's wishes?

Is there any evidence of serious work undertaken under Louis XVI to study and bring to a successful conclusion the emancipation of the Jewish people? This is an important question. For the Revolution and the Empire would later claim as their own the generous thought of having first thought of and worked towards the resurrection of this ilotic people.

We reply:

The initiative belongs neither to the Revolution nor to the Empire. It belongs entirely to Louis XVI. There is incontrovertible proof, grouped around the name of Malesherbes. Here is the evidence:

First proof. - Formation of a commission of the Council of State by Louis XVI, and choice of Malesherbes AS CHAIRMAN OF THIS COMMISSION TO EXAMINE THE QUESTION OF FREEDOM.

Quotes:

Under the auspices of King Louis XVI, the Conseil d'Etat saw the formation of a commission with the aim of removing the Jews from the odious regime of exceptional laws, and composed largely of intendants who had administered the provinces inhabited by the Israelites. (Quoted from the Israelite historian Léon Halévy, *Histoire des juifs modernes*, p. 298).

M. de Malesherbes set up a commission of State Councillors, over which he himself presided: it was chosen from among the former intendants who had administered in the provinces where the most Jews lived (Betting de Lancastel, *Considérations sur l'état des juifs*, p. 57).

So, first proof: the establishment of the commission, and the presidency entrusted to Malesherbes.

Second proof. - The commission works.

In fact, it functioned for an entire year: 1788.

And there's more:

The commission felt it had to surround itself with all possible enlightenment. That's why it called on the most distinguished Israelites from various parts of France. Historians cite their names:

Messrs Furtado, Gradis, Lopès-Dlbec, Cerfbeer, Beer Isaac Beer, Lazard, Trexel, Foxseca,
from Bordeaux;

- Bordeaux ; - Bordeaux ;
- Alsace ;
- Nancy ;
- Paris;
- Paris ;

- Bayonne.

"These delegates provided M. de Malesherbes, who consulted them, with documents on the social state of their co-religionists. (Halévy , p. 299-500; Graetz , *Hist. des juifs*, t. XI, p. 190; Bédarride, *les Juifs eu France*, p. 595; Malvezin, *les Juifs de Bordeaux*, p. 245-54; *Archives israélites*, année 1841, p. 502.)

The workings of the commission, the appeal made to the most distinguished Israelites to contribute their observations, the arrival and depositions of these Israelites, this is certainly a second piece of irrefutable evidence.¹

Third proof. - Results of the work.

Two important results:

The first was a *Mémoire* written by Malesherbes cl, which he presented to the King.

There can be no doubt about the composition and exis-

tence of this *Mémoire*. It is mentioned in a letter addressed by the famous deputy Grégoire to an Israelite on February 25, 1789, i.e. a year after the *Mémoire* was written. We were fortunate enough to find this letter.

Emberménil, February 25, 1789.

Tell me then, my dear Bing, on the eve of the Estates General, shouldn't you consult with other members of your nation to claim the rights and benefits of citizens; now is the time more than ever; you know that the King had ALREADY ASKED M. DE MALESHERBES FOR A MEMORIAL ON THE JEWISH PEOPLE...

Grégoire,

parish priest of Emberménil.

What became of this *Mémoire*? This is what M. Boissy-d'Anglas says in his *Histoire de Malesherbes*: "His memoir on the Jews seems to have been intended to change the fate of this nation. It remained in manuscript: it was an immense work. No other work on this subject contains such extensive and curious research. Let us hope that, if it exists, it will not be lost forever; let us at least beseech those who possess it, especially if, as is hardly doubtful, its principal aim was to alleviate the ills of such a numerous class of men, to fulfill the author's views by preparing a new triumph for his eloquence and virtue." (Boissy-d'Anglas, *Essai sur Malesh.*, t. II, p. 55).

M. Dupin, in his eulogy of Malesherbes delivered at the Académie française in 1841, also speaks of this *Mémoire*: "Malesherbes had extended his solicitude to the Israelites; he had composed in their favor a *Mémoire* filled with the most curious research. I don't know what happened to this work. (*Académie française, Discours et Pièces diverses*, 1840-1849, p. J260, p. 1507.)

It is a thousand regrets that this *Mémoire* has been lost. La Harpe said of Malesherbes' other works: "They are like monuments of virtue in a century of corruption. "This one must certainly have been, in such a difficult question, a monument of moderation and mercy.

The first result of the commission's conferences and work was a *Mémoire de Malesherbes* presented to the king.

The second was the preparation of an edict:

"The voice of equity was heard at last. The GOUVERNEMENT

OF LOUIS XVI WAS TO ISSUE AN EDIT IN FAVOR OF THE JEWS¹, WHEN THE REVOLUTION ARRIVED.” (Quoted from the Israelite historian Halévy: *Histoire des juifs modernes*, p. 500).

Is it possible to be more formal and explicit in recognizing and designating the source from which the rehabilitation was to begin? So it was not the Revolution that first raised its voice in favor of the Jews, since the voice of equity had already been heard under Louis XVI!

And so, the formation of a commission at the Conseil d'État, the choice of Malesherbes as president, the operation of this commission throughout 1788, the appeal made to the most distinguished Israelites to contribute their observations, the drafting of a *Mémoire* by Malesherbes and its presentation to the King, and finally the preparation of an Edict – these were the common thoughts, the common work of Louis XVI and Malesherbes in favor of the Jews. How dare anyone say, after that, that to take up the cause of the Israelites required the Revolution or the Empire!

II

Malesherbes and Cerfbeer.

“Cerfbeer was one of the most important members of Malesherbes’ entourage “1 We already know this venerable and tireless Israelite, passionate about the rehabilitation of his brothers. We have followed in his footsteps, at court with Louis XVI, in Strasbourg in his trial with the aldermen,² in Berlin philosophizing with Mendelssohn and having Dohm’s book translated;¹ we now find him the first to rush to Malesherbes. At every stage of the Jewish question, he is there, with his ideas, his gold, his credit, his pleas, persuading, one after the other, all the influential figures who, from near or far, will be important in the question. Let’s contemplate him, in 1788, in Malesherbes’ cabinet. It’s a consolation to see these two men side by side: both patriarchal types, both universally esteemed, both concerned with the happiness of others. What are they looking for together? Ways to bring about reconciliation. The gentlest role that can be fulfilled on earth is that of reconciler. It belongs to Malesherbes and Cerfbeer. Together, they sought ways to bring Jews and Christians together, and even Jews among themselves.

They wanted to bring Jews and Christians closer together, just as the government of Louis XVI had been fortunate enough to achieve between Protestants and Catholics. In an edict issued in November 1787, the King lifted the civil disabilities imposed on all those who did not profess the Catholic religion. An Israelite jurisconsult, assessing this edict in favor of Protestants, said: “The preamble to the edict, which restores civil status to Protestants, is noteworthy. Louis, etc. We proscribe all forms of violence, which are as contrary to the principles of reason and humanity as they are to the true spirit of Christianity... We must therefore no longer allow our laws to punish them needlessly for the misfortune of their birth, by depriving them of the rights that nature never ceases to claim in their favor”. The Israelite jurisconsult draws the following conclusion from the edict: “This edict, which seemed to be addressed only to Protestants, embraced all those who did not profess the Catholic religion. It was the precursor of the complete emancipation of the Jews. “1 This judgment

by an Israelite pen attests to the sincere benevolence of Louis XVI's government. Malesherbes studied and searched with Cerfbeer and the other delegates from Bordeaux, Bayonne, Paris and Nancy for the desirable realization of this benevolence, and how to bring joy to the Israelites, after having already brought it to the Protestants.

It gets better. Cerfbeer urged Malesherbes to help bring the Israelites closer together. In France, the situation was not the same for the various groups of Jews. Letters patent, obtained under previous reigns, had given the Bordeaux and Bayonne groups a somewhat golden status; they enjoyed the most extensive privileges, and could acquire land, while the Jews of Alsace groaned under the most severe laws of exception. The latter were *ilots*, compared with their brothers from Bordeaux and Bayonne, who were free traders and peaceful landowners. Happiness often makes one selfish, and unlearns the bonds of race and kinship. The Jews of Bordeaux made a strange plea to M. de Malesherbes, when the improvement of the lot of the Jews was put on the back burner; writing to their representatives to the Minister, they said: "We urge you to please represent to M. de Malesherbes that any change in the situation of the Jews would be contrary to his wishes. de Malesherbes that any change to the present situation of the Jews of Bordeaux could only harm their happiness; and, as you know the insurmountable reluctance they have throughout Europe to ally or incorporate with any other kind of Jew with whom they do not wish to be confused, it would be a great service to them if you would kindly urge M. de Malesherbes not to allow the Jews of Bordeaux to be confused with any other kind of Jew. de Malesherbes not to include them in any way in the new law he is charged with drafting in favor of the Jews of Alsace and Lorraine..."¹

These Bordeaux Jews were, as we can see, very proud. Not only were they eager to preserve their privileged position, but they also had no desire to be confused with other Jews, claiming to be descended, through their Spanish or Portuguese origins, from Jews of the royal tribe of Judah who had once been transplanted to Spain. So they wrote again to their delegates to the minister:

"Cordeaux, May 8, 1788.

“Gentlemen,

“We have received the letter you honored us with... We must assure you of the same secrecy... that, for our part, we recommend you on your mission... so that nothing you have to deal with comes to the knowledge of the Avignon and German Jews, who could only infinitely harm our main object of preserving our corporation, by the steps and solicitations they would make to oppose it, and be confused with us under the one general denomination of Jews.... You are too well aware of any incompatibility between the uses, customs and way of life of the other Jews and the blacks, not to take this opportunity to point it out as you should. And, without openly admitting, in the conversations you will have, the difference that exists between their morals and ours, so as not to depreciate them too much, nor agree that there is none in the religious dogma, you can represent that they overload it with many ridiculous ceremonies, rabbinical ideas, and that they are in some way so enslaved to all sorts of superstitions or bigotries, that this has further demeaned them in our eyes, to the point where we have never been allowed to covenant with them in holy matrimony. Perhaps if it were absolutely necessary, it would not be difficult to justify by some research the original superiority which has always been recognized in the Portuguese Jews, and the tradition which has always been preserved to this day that they are descended, without any mixture, from the ancient chiefs of the Jewish nation, who were taken from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar before the Babylonian captivity, and who were led to Spain... “1

This letter reveals the insurmountable repugnance that the Bordeaux Jews, known as Portuguese, felt and harbored for the rest of the Jews, particularly those from Alsace. The gulf that the Christian peoples had driven between themselves and the Jews, the group of Portuguese Jews in turn drove a wider gulf between themselves and the rest of their race. This was what deeply distressed the generous Cerfbeer. Pettiness in the midst of a common misfortune is, for exiles, the hardest affliction, and the torment of liberators. The Jewish race had enough to suffer, without making itself suffer. Cerfbeer, honored by the King, happy, educated, free to acquire property, had only one preoccupation: to make all those of his race share in the same

benefits. "He had enough heart not to fall into selfishness, enough love of liberty to procure it for others "2 That's why, with all his power and credit, he held in check the narrow, unbrotherly solicitations of the Bordeaux Jewish group. They received the following reply from their delegates: "Despite our reluctance, the government, which seems disposed to diminish or erase the distinctions between us and other subjects, must be much less so to allow them to subsist among ourselves; it would therefore be pointless to flatter ourselves that a separate and distinct law would be made... "1

Cerfbeer triumphed with the minister. Malesherbes, a good philanthropist, had no difficulty in agreeing with the generous Israelite. We were about to move from the particular to the general, in other words, from benefits granted under previous reigns to groups of Jews in Bordeaux and Bayonne, to benefits that would extend to the entire Jewish nation: "We thought, in Metz, that a transformation would not be long in coming in the situation of the Jews in France: M. de Malesherbes had promised it, and he was working on it. "2

III

The name Malesherbes remains dear to the Israelites.

The name of Malesherbes remained dear to the Israelites.

His role has even been enlarged, at the expense of Louis XVI's: "A few years before the Revolution, Malesherbes, moved by the sad situation of the Jews, and determined to do them justice at last, formed a commission under his presidency "3 etc. - Already, by a first edict, Malesherbes had abolished the tolls that likened them to beasts of burden. It was not at this first benefit that this minister stopped his benevolent thoughts: the question of their political rehabilitation occupied his mind. "1 Truth demands that in such sentences, the King's name replaces that of the minister, or at least precedes it.

We shall judge this noble figure of Malesherbes under the rays of total, historical and Christian truth:

Malesherbes! this name will remain forever venerated in Israel;

He took pity on the sad plight of the Jews, he protected them, he worked to rehabilitate them!

To the son of Israel, who has the good fortune to belong by birth and conversion to both Testaments, Malesherbes appears as a man both patriarchal and evangelical: patriarchal by the morals of his whole life; evangelical, in his decline, by his zeal for the poor Jews, by his devotion to the royal victim, by his sincere return to Catholic practice before dying on the scaffold!

O Malesherbes, thank you for what you did, alongside Louis XVI, in favor of our nation. Afterwards, people wanted to give you all the glory. You wouldn't have put up with it, and neither will we. We say: Malesherbes was, for the fallen of Israel, the beneficent and visiting ray; but the disk of kindness, it was Louis XVI!

"Kiss them, Sire", the minister had suggested to the unfortunate monarch, while in the Temple prison the latter didn't know how to reward his two defenders, Tronchet and de Sèze... It seems that such an outpouring of kindness was advised by the monarch to his minister, since it was Malesherbes who was commissioned by Louis XVI to bring to the most guilty people the first embrace of forgiveness and reconciliation. Malesherbes embraced the long-suffering

head of the poor wandering Jew... Yes, it's a coincidence we'd like to point out one last time, so touching is it: he who pleaded the cause of Louis XVI, of innocence, was also charged, by heaven, this time appeased, with pleading the cause of the guilty of Golgotha!

At the end of his career, Malesherbes achieved the supreme glory that consecrates all the others, that of dying for justice and staining with his blood the lilies he had defended. He walked to the scaffold, leaning on his daughter's arm. The heroic child told Mlle de Sombreuil: "Mademoiselle, you had the good fortune to save your father's life, now I'm going to have the good fortune to die with mine.

May our heroines, Débora, Judith and Esther, have come forward and bowed at your daughter's entry into heaven, O Malesherbes, and also at yours: in admiration before her, in gratitude before you!

CHAPTER V

WHAT, IN ALL PROBABILITY, WOULD HAVE BEEN
THE SOLUTION ADOPTED BY LOUIS XVI IN THE
EMANCIPATION OF THE ISRAELITES

ASSUMING THAT THE REVOLUTION HAD NOT IN-
TERRUPTED AND USURPED THE ROYAL UNDERTAKING

I

Malesherbes' philosophism tempered by Louis XVI's Catholicism.

Before the Revolution, Louis XVI undertook the social rehabilitation of the Israelites. He was the first to love them. We have proved this abundantly.

But what would this rehabilitation have consisted of for the Israelites, assuming that Louis XVI's reign had not been interrupted by the Revolution, and that the Jewish question had found its solution under the monarchy? Would this solution have resembled the one later adopted by the Constituent Assembly in 1791? And can we predict what Malesherbes would have succeeded in getting the monarch to accept in favor of his clients, had he been able to see through to the end the undertaking with which the good King had entrusted him? History can only record probabilities. But if we take the trouble to carefully examine the characters involved, their actions, the concerns they had about their responsibilities, the demands of the public mind at the time - in short, if we carefully reconstruct the historical milieu - it turns out that these probabilities border on certainty.

As far as Malesherbes is concerned, it should not be forgotten that he was a philosopher rather than a Christian at the time he was dealing with the fate of the Israelites with the commission of the Conseil d'État. Obviously, his philanthropy would have inclined him to present the King with a solution that was more humanitarian than Christian. But we don't think he would have dared. It would have offended the public mind, which was not yet sufficiently favorable to the Jews. Ideas of humanity were undoubtedly at work in peo-

ple's minds, but for everyone else, Jews were still not men like the others. There was still too much Christianity in morals and laws, too much aversion between Christians and Jews, for the minister to allow himself the bold, hurtful initiative of a purely humanitarian solution, by virtue of which the Jews would have become legally, and from the outset, the equals of Christians. It is therefore almost certain that, in this still nebulous but still irritating question, Malesherbes' philosophism would have been subordinated to Louis XVI's Catholicism.

But what would the King have decided?

II

The solution would have been dictated by the Christian spirit, and emancipation would therefore have been gradual. Evidence from: 1° the circumspect spirit of the monarchy;

2° the wise conduct of Louis XVI; 3° public opinion at the time; 4° the admission of Jewish historians.

There are two modes of emancipation, which we have set out and developed in the chapter on Difficulties:

Gradual emancipation.

Complete and immediate emancipation.

The first will consist of gradually initiating these men, who have never been part of society, new though they are, and full of prejudices, into the duties and rights of citizenship. They will learn about freedom and equality. They will rise, as if by degrees, to the full exercise of civil life. The legislator will make perfect citizenship a reward for the fulfillment of the first social duties.

The second mode of emancipation, on the other hand, should consist in eliminating all intermediaries, declaring the Jew a perfect citizen, and saying to him: "From now on, you belong to society, and society belongs to you.

Which of these two modes of emancipation would Louis XVI have chosen?

It's safe to say that the direlian monarch would have chosen the first option. He would have decreed an emancipation that was broad and generous, but restrained and gradual. We believe he would have reached out to the Israelites, saying: "Become my children, but let me take care of everything.

What proves this?

First of all, the Christian and circumspect spirit of the monarchy. As a vigilant father of the Christian people, a French king - especially one called Louis XVI - would have sought to avoid compromising the interests of the Catholic people by showing mercy and liberality towards the Jews. His magnanimity would have been far-sighted. In wanting to adopt the Jews as his children, he would have been careful not to diminish or endanger the situation of his other Christian

children, doubly dear to his heart because they were also dear to the Church. There was a clear danger to the interests of the Christian people in emancipating the Jews completely at once, without guarantees, without precautions, without training. There was none in gradual emancipation. The King of France would have adopted it.

A second proof of the option we are talking about is provided by Louis XVI's wise conduct towards them, and by the publication of the Letters Patent of 1784. How did the King proceed? Gradually. First, he abolished the right of toll, which equated them with pack animals. Then, with the Letters Patent of 1784, he fixed their residence in France and widened their sphere of activity. Finally, through the project entrusted to Malesherbes, he prepared to initiate them, albeit gradually, to all the advantages of civil life. "It seems obvious to us that Louis XVI did not have the idea of suddenly admitting them to the community of civil rights, and of erasing all the guarantees he himself had laid down in his Letters Patent of 1784... It is reasonable to think that he would have achieved gradual emancipation. Before completely surrendering the Jews to the trials of civil and political liberty, he would no doubt have maintained them in a system of preparation and initiation, making services rendered to the fatherland and to society the condition for admission to the community of citizens.

But here's another, very strong, convincing piece of evidence: the decision of public opinion, which supported the Crown's prudence in this serious matter. Indeed, at the same time as the question of emancipating the Israelites was being considered by the Conseil d'Etat, the Société royale des sciences et arts de Metz was putting it to the vote. Briefs were sent to Metz from various parts of France. We have read them carefully. All those in favor of emancipation wanted it to be gradual. We shall limit ourselves to citing the most famous of these, that of Abbé Grégoire, who won the academic prize. He ends his work with this chapter: Chap. xxvi: Necessity of preparing Jews and Christians for this revolution; time needed to bring it about. From this we extract the following reflections: "... On the subject of the reform of the Jews, I have always thought that we should begin by instructing and preparing the public before publishing laws... The

reform of the Jews is not, in truth, the work of a moment, for we know that, in general, the march of reason, like that of the sea, is only perceptible after centuries; but, although moral revolutions are usually very slow, this one will be more rapid... We like to think that two generations would be enough for this reform, because everything is working together to bring it about. "1

Abbé Grégoire's memoir was crowned in Metz at a public and solemn session held on August 25, 1788. At this meeting, the president, M. Le Payen, perpetual secretary of the Société royale des sciences et des arts, also pronounced these significant words: "The passage from the present state of the Jews to the one we would like to give them, to make them more useful and happier, would need to be prepared and planned with great art. "2

Public opinion was clearly in favor of gradual emancipation. It is highly probable, not to say certain, that Louis XVI and his Council would have conformed to this universal sentiment.

A final piece of evidence can be deduced from the assessments of Jewish writers after the Revolution. They almost unanimously agree that they needed the Revolution to escape gradual emancipation. Such is the feeling of Graetz in his *Histoire des juifs*, of Halphen in the *Recueil des lois concernant les Israélites*, of Bédarride in *Y Histoire des juifs de France*, and of all the editors of *Archives israélites* and *Univers israélite*.

Thus, a probability that borders on certainty: Louis XVI's edict, following on from Malesherbes' work, would have granted Israelites gradual emancipation.

III

What this gradual emancipation of the Israelites would most probably have consisted of.

But, assuming that the edict had been promulgated by the King and registered in the *Bulletin des lois*, what would have been the condition imposed on the Israelites; in other words, what would this gradual emancipation have consisted of for them?

The gradual emancipation would certainly have concerned their persons and civil functions.

It is highly probable, in fact, that not all Jews would have been called upon at once, *en masse*, to benefit from the new regime. The most worthy would have been called first. There is a very curious document in support of this probability: letters of naturalization granted by the King to two Israelites from the Messin region, for services rendered to Lorraine during the German war, and during the famine that devastated the province.¹ These letters of royal munificence bear the date 1787, precisely the year in which the Jewish question came under consideration. They contain these significant words: "We consider the sieurs Hayem and Cerf-Worms susceptible of the same favor as the sieurs Calmer, Cerf-Beer, Hombert, Lallemand, Jacob de Perpignan and Lévy, individuals of their religion, to whom Letters Patent have been granted, assuring them of all the privileges enjoyed by regnicoles in France. If we are careful, this document names and calls eight Israelites and their families to the benefits of civil life enjoyed by other inhabitants of the kingdom. Is this not proof that, in the monarch's mind, there was, if not a well-defined plan, at least an idea of dignity, of the gradation of individuals, to which he was quite happy to subject Jewish emancipation? It seemed wise to him to reward and favor a certain number of individuals, before the whole nation: like raindrops which, falling first one by one, announce the beneficent shower! If we recall and place alongside this document the profound irritation of Alsace, which was then being squeezed by the Jews (as described in Book I), we are entitled to conclude that Louis XVI would never have consented to bring Alsace's exasperation to a climax by emancipating all the Jews at once.

In addition to individuals, the gradation also concerned civil foundations. We do not believe that Louis XVI's edict would have allowed the Israelites to occupy all posts and administrations indiscriminately. It is rather difficult to determine what the reserve would have been. The documents that speak of it present various rather vague projects. Summing up their observations, and especially taking into account the benevolent but Christian dispositions of Louis XVI, one augurs that emancipation could have been as follows:

Recognize the right of Jews to live and even to purchase anywhere in the country;

Open all schools and army ranks to them, but reserve the great functions and dignities of the State;

Give them free access to all liberal careers, such as the bar and medicine, but carefully prohibit them from entering those where the Christian conscience and spirit must manifestly and officially appear and assert themselves, such as the judiciary and teaching.

Such would have been, at least for a time, the *modus vivendi* of Israelites and Christians. Honorable for some, it would have been tutelary for others. Public opinion approved and demanded it. There is every reason to believe that Louis XVI's edict would have expressed and enshrined it.

IV

How it would have been, at once, highly advantageous for Christian France, and highly honorable for the Israelites.

Tutulary for Christians, honorable for Israelites: is it really true that these were the results of this edict?

Everything that is done with weight, number and measure, presents guarantees, prospers, and translates into happy results. Gradual, measured emancipation, as envisaged by Louis XVI, undeniably offered these guarantees and promised these results.

It was tutulary for Christians. Indeed:

A. In the first place, the actions of the Jews did not escape control. They escaped it thanks to unlimited freedom. The trace of what they did from the Revolution onwards, albeit in the century of the greatest publicity, was lost, as it were, concealed, thanks to the crowd of which they were a part; and suddenly, without the public being able to explain how, they appeared to be the masters of society. The Rhine is a phenomenon to which Jewish vitality has often been compared. For a long time, it flows uncovered, majestic, then disappears, seems lost, and towards its mouth reappears with multiplied abundance. Jewish activity, the smallest details of which were known in previous centuries because it was circumscribed and monitored, was concealed and lost from 1791 onwards, when unlimited liberty was granted, and suddenly reappeared to take precedence over everything else. Louis XVI's plan had this drawback in spades: it kept Israelite activity in a bed that was undoubtedly wider than in the past, but uncovered and contained.

B. Secondly, the great functions of the State, those in which the Christian character must necessarily show itself, were placed outside their reach, outside their contest. This was wise and just, since France was a very Christian nation. With this precaution, even though the greatest latitude would have been left to them for other liberal careers, for all commercial and industrial professions, even for the free acquisition of property, public wealth was saved. Had the edict prepared by Louis XVI seen the light of day, the country would never have been reduced to uttering the muffled cry of regret and

despair that would be heard a century later: "France was wrong not to guard against those who have cut up the public treasury and who have so infused us with their metallic harshness, that I don't know that we would die of another evil. "1

C. Thirdly, the temple of justice was safeguarded, since on a magistrate's seat, under a crucifix, a Jew could never have sat. True justice requires the shadow of the Cross, or it is no longer justice. This has been the law of history since Calvary.

This is the way in which the project of gradual, balanced emancipation being prepared under the eyes of Louis XVI, was tutelary for Christian France.

On the other hand, however, he treated the Israelites with honor. Indeed:

In the first place, they could rise and move sufficiently, at least in the early days of this new era, since all the industrial professions and a large number of liberal careers opened up before them. The only exceptions were those immediately related to the essence of Christian and French society. Some of them, the advanced, the leaders, asked for "as much as possible"; but most of them wished for, whispered "as little as possible". Why? because they dreaded the duties of civilian life even more than they appreciated its advantages; that's always the effect of long servitude! They also dreaded mixing with the terrible people of Alsace, who, for their part, said loudly: "Back off! No contact with these usurers. The unknown was frightening for these men parked on the outskirts, these old Talmudists, these dealers and second-hand goods dealers who were reassured only among themselves and in their back alleys. All the more reason for them to tread cautiously and carefully in the emancipation proposed to them! Most of them would gladly have contented themselves with the right to become freeholders, and would have done without the rest of the emancipation.

Secondly, with Louis XVI's project, their moral virtues would have been stimulated to develop, since admission to the community of citizens would have been the reward - very easily granted, incidentally - for their new duties and patriotic services. We must never complain that freedom itself has degrees, when these degrees

are to the benefit of virtue. All educational institutions are founded on this principle. A people, relegated to the sidelines for centuries, has not been able to avoid contracting the vices inherent in its state of ilotism, vices which will not dissipate. not by the fact of doors open wide in society, but by the benefit of education. Learning about freedom through Louis XVI's edict would have stimulated the virtues he lacked. The rich Israelite nature lends itself to the manifestation of heroism as much as to the acquisition of wealth. If conducted intelligently, gradual emancipation would have brought fewer golden calf worshippers and more Machabees into French society!

C. Thirdly, the return of the Israelites to the Catholic Church would have been encouraged. That's the big one! But how would gradual emancipation have produced this encouragement? Here's how:

On the one hand, the Israelites were entering the beautiful Christian and French society, by virtue of the emancipation decree; on the other hand, they were forced to stop at a certain limit, because of the Christian conscience which was not their own: as in the past, Gentiles could penetrate and advance as far as the first terrace of the Temple of Jerusalem, but were not to go beyond it.¹ This limit would, no doubt, have irritated some of the new citizens; but it would have had the better result of making the greater number think and stimulating them.

Let's suppose, in fact, that the reign of Louis XVI was coming to a majestic end:

The happy reforms so courageously undertaken by the noble prince continue and expand without the deceitful cooperation of the Revolution;

The laws were carefully revised;

Corvées are abolished;

Equality of taxation is established;

An account of the state of finances is made public;

Everyone's religious beliefs were respected, while the Church was regarded as queen;

Hospitals were organized: every illness had its own ward, every patient its own bed;

Commerce and industry flourished;

Liberal careers and administrative posts were open to anyone: only those functions that absolutely demanded the expression of a Catholic conscience remained reserved for Catholics;

Finally, the Estates General opened regularly, in peace and fraternal concord among all classes. French society truly resembled the peaceful revolution of the stars, and needed no violent revolution.¹

It was at this point that the Israelites were introduced into society as new citizens, with solicitude, but also with care. They give thanks, and are not surprised by the limit: there is a Catholic public conscience directing the social body, and they recognize it; they understand the limit, and respect it. They admire the beautiful order, and are struck by it. In the hospitals where they can be doctors, and where there are Sisters of Charity who carry out their prescriptions, they welcome their relationship with these angels. In the public schools where they can sit, they learn to know, with Saint Thomas Aquinas, with Newton, Bossuet, Malebranche, Corneille, Racine, the horizons that faith has opened to the human spirit, and the wings it gives it. They compare all these breadths with the defiance and narrow teachings of their rabbis. ¹¹they reflect: and with these reflections come the noble ambition to cross the line, to be like everyone else, and inevitably the impetus is given to their conversion. What we are writing here, with emotion in our souls, is no pious utopia. How many Israelites, discreetly taking part in a beautiful religious celebration in a Catholic temple, have been moved, touched, secretly drawn to Catholicism! Well, if, at the end of the XVIIIth century, the sons of Israel had been introduced with discernment and discretion into a society such as Louis XVI wanted and prepared, the effect on them would have been that of the interior of a church sparkling with lights and scented with incense!

We object:

In the Middle Ages, society offered them this spectacle, and they didn't convert.

We reply: You can't expect the same effects from completely different situations. In the Middle Ages, the Jews contemplated society from afar: it repelled them, and they had repugnance for it. At the end of the eighteenth century, on the contrary, society, by virtue

of the progress of the times, invited them in, and their repugnance began to fall away. It was at this point that society should have shown itself to be more Catholic than ever, both to neutralize the anti-Christian influence of the new citizens it was admitting, and to influence their return to the truth. This would have exerted an irresistible ascendancy over them, and renewed, in their favor, a mystery of mercy: an ascendancy and a mystery of mercy, of which the Gentiles themselves were the object in the ancient Temple of Jerusalem.

It was the day after Palm Sunday, or Holy Monday;

In their innocent games, the children of the Temple recalled the scene of the previous day, singing: Hosanna to the Son of David;¹

Gentiles were in the forecourt. We pointed out earlier that the temple had a courtyard, a terrace, where Gentiles were allowed to enter and stand: it was called the court of the Gentiles. Inscriptions in various languages forbade them to pass beyond it, and a sculpted stone balustrade stopped them. This was their limit.

The Messiah's triumphal entry into the city and Temple of Jerusalem had just taken place. Struck by what they had seen and heard, some Gentiles, Greeks who, according to the evangelist Saint John, were then in the Gentile court, approached one of the Apostles and asked him: Lord, we wish to see Jesus.¹ It was a solemn hour in the history of the world. To wish to see Jesus, was it not the desire to know the truth, to ascend into the light, to be converted? At that moment, the angels had to sing the abrogation of the limit. A few months later, the crowds of Gentiles entered the Church of God!

Something similar would have happened (this is our intimate conviction), if the gradual emancipation of the Israelites had taken place in the midst of a profoundly Christian society, a harmonious, well-ordered society, singing the hosanna to its Christ at the same time as showing compassion for the lost. Struck by the beautiful order, the Israelites, introduced up to a certain limit, would have reflected. One day, out of their hearts, came the Gentiles' request, touchingly modified: "We wish to see Jesus again!

This reunion is announced.² The Revolution will delay it.

CHAPTER VI

THE REVOLUTION SEIZES UPON LOUIS XVI'S EMANCIPATION OF THE ISRAELITES AND DISTORTS IT

I

The Revolution is a thief.

The Revolution is a thief!

One of the characteristics of contempt that the Holy Books point out in the devil is that he is a thief. When, out of God's hands, he shone under the name of Lucifer, the most beautiful of the angels, he sought to rob God of his glory, by declaring himself his equal.¹ Then, in Eden, he advised Eve to lay her hands on the fruit that did not belong to her.

This same role he has continued to play ever since, throughout all the centuries of history, a hardened backslider!

During the ages of paganism, he had altars erected and victims immolated, always to rob God of his glory, for sacrifice is the most beautiful homage to the Divinity. Doctors of the Church have called him God's monkey. This designation is very expressive.² The devil, in fact, watches what God is going to do, imitates it, and at the same time steals it. Like a great ape in a royal park taking the fruits of the King!

In the Christian ages, the habit of stealing that is the very essence of the Spirit of Evil is no less evident. Whenever, in his loving providence, the Eternal One has prepared a great act in favor of the true and beautiful progress of the centuries, in favor of civilization and the salvation of peoples, the devil has watched it, imitated it and stolen it. This is what happened, for example, in the xvith century. The Church, led by the Spirit of God, was itself proclaiming the need for reform, with the aim of removing either the last vestiges of the state of barbarism from which the Christian nations had been drawn, or the disorders and abuses that had been introduced during the fertile period of the Crusades. Saint Bernard, Saint Theresa and

Saint John of the Cross were already preaching this reformation in the depths of monasteries; and the holy Council of Trent was about to assemble to apply it first to the house of God, then to the whole social body. But then a son of fire appeared, Luther: inspired by the devil, he stole the idea and the project that the Church had had, accomplished in fire and blood what the Church had begun to accomplish in penitence and holy tears, and made people forget or prevent them from seeing the reformation, by establishing the Reformation. Daughter of the devil, the Reformation was a thief.

The same is true of the Revolution. It began by stealing, and continues to do so. Comte de Maistre stamped a stigma on its forehead that made La La jump, but that has stuck: "The Revolution has a satanic character. Satanic, because all it knew how to do was to take stolen things and distort them. It stole everything that Louis XVI had prepared that was good and useful for the people, for progress, for the happiness of generations to come. The King's plans for political reorganization and social reform had been carefully and sincerely studied: the Revolution took them away. The accursed monkey got into the park at Versailles!

With the best of intentions, people have tried to explain and even legitimize the Revolution, saying: "It had two aspects and two poles: a negative pole, but also a positive or affirmative pole: that of destruction, and that of edification." This is a dangerous way of explaining the Revolution.

Yes, without doubt, we can say that the Revolution has two aspects, two poles; but we must carefully add: The positive is what it stole from the King; the negative is what it found in its own fund of mischief.

Indeed, the Revolution has behaved in politics in exactly the same way as Protestantism has behaved in religion. As the philosopher Balmes has demonstrated in his inimitable and skilful analysis, Protestantism too has positive elements mixed with negative ones in its constitution. But the positive is what the Reformation stole from the Church, the shreds of evangelical truths, the remnants of evangelical justice and evangelical charity that explain why Protestantism still endures; it lives on what it took away. The negative is

what belongs to it: separation, emptiness, death, which it has spread among souls and peoples.

So it is with the Revolution. The positive, or what is good – for example, the ideas of equality before the law, universal fraternity, individual liberty – the Gospel had brought to the world, and Louis XVI was meditating on them in his Versailles study, seeking to make them penetrate further into the political forms of France, when the Revolution came to steal them from him. The negative, that which is evil, anarchy, despotism, ruin – this is what belongs to the Revolution, and what it produces with the help of the stolen and distorted holy ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity.

Such is our judgment of the Revolution. It has been said in all too beautiful language: “Its name is on everyone’s lips, an object of terror and hatred for some, of admiration and worship for others. The Nile has seen its soldiers, the Tagus and the Borysthenes have heard the sound of its march, and further afield, its arm has extended from the valleys of the Andes to the motionless beaches where Confucius believed he had forever chained the souls of generations. The world is on its feet, and even those who are still seated sense that the flood will rise up to them, and that, according to the prophecy of one of the first orators of this gigantic power, the Revolution will circle the globe. “1 This way of explaining, of almost celebrating the Revolution, proves that we have been struck by the rays of light that surround it: but these rays in no way belong to it, any more than they belong to the Angel of Darkness who wraps himself in them.² We believe we are more right in saying, in saying over and over again: She’s a thief, – who, unfortunately, will be allowed to travel the globe!

We, for our part, are authorized to formulate this accusation of theft more forcefully, if we consider what happened with regard to the reformation project concerning the Israelites.

II

Among the things stolen . was Louis XVI's plan to emancipate the Israelites.

Indeed, if we summarize, with all the documents in hand, everything we now know about Louis XVI's kindnesses towards the Israelites, should not fairness lead us to say the following?

Here is a prince who, at the beginning of his reign, having found the Israelites stopped at the city gates to pay a tax that likened them to beasts of burden, said to them: "You are men, you will no longer pay it.

A prince who, saddened by their ever uncertain state, by their ceaselessly wandering errands, said to them in the Letters Patent of 1784: "You are my children, reside in peace in my kingdom;"

A prince who, having rewarded with royal munificence the services of the Jewish banker Cerfbeer with Letters of Naturalization and even Letters of Nobility,¹ did not abandon him in the conflict that pitted this Jew against the entire city of Strasbourg;

A prince who, for the first time since the ruin of Jerusalem, allowed the question of the political emancipation of the Jewish nation to be put before public opinion;

Who gave him the most liberal of ministers, the most honest of magistrates, the most beloved of men, the most devoted to misfortune: the virtuous Malesherbes;

A prince who has referred this grave and delicate question to the Council of State; who is preparing an edict in which wisdom will go hand in hand with mercy, and in which precautions and leniency will be combined with all the possible facilities of civil life: because if Louis XVI is the friend of the poor Jews, the King of France is the father of the Christian peoples and the guardian of their interests;

All this was prepared, studied and drafted, and then all of a sudden... came the Revolution, which took Louis XVI's work and made it its own. And it will be said that it was the Revolution that first thought of the Israelites! And we'll write that it took the Revolution to lift them out of their pariah status and restore their honor! Historical lie, revolutionary rapine!

A supposition:

We know that, when Moses was carrying out his great work of deliverance on behalf of God's people, Korah, Dathan and Abiron revolted against him in the desert with their numerous cohorts, and that they were swallowed up alive in the earth, which opened up beneath their feet at Moses' voice. If, instead of the abyss that opened up and devoured them, their revolution had succeeded, wouldn't the Spirit of lies have had the audacity to record in history that the exit from Egypt belonged to them, and not to Moses? In France, alas! the earth opens up under the broken throne and the spilled blood of the most virtuous of monarchs, and history, handed over to the thousand hands of lies, records that the emancipation of the Israelites belongs to the Revolution... Oh no! it was King Louis XVI who prepared the way for Israel to emerge from the house of servitude, from the iron furnace!1

There is no purer pleasure for the historian than to put an end to a long-accredited error, especially when that error was at the same time an injustice.

A day will come when history, too, will regain the freedom after which every enslaved creature yearns; and, shaking off the pages of lies, it will resume its natural course under the pen of God's children. It will certainly bring together, in a radiant and touching synthesis, the benefits that France and humanity owe to Louis XVI. It will be the jewel box of the Martyr King. May the documents in this book merit that, alongside the other benefits, the emancipation of the Israelites also shines in the jewel box! It's a diamond with Palestinian flames, which we are returning, in the name of history better studied, to the Crown of France!

III

She's going to distort it. Henceforth, the breath of philosophism, instead of the Christian breath, will drive emancipation. Alsace alone understood and warned of the danger in 1790.

But if this was Louis XVI's great and beautiful contribution to the emancipation of the people of Israel, what role will the Revolution play in this emancipation?

Alas, this role :

Just as a thief demarcates and distorts a stolen object, the better to appropriate it, so will the Revolution behave. It will misrepresent the emancipation of the Jews begun by Louis XVI, in order to appropriate and use it.

And how will it do this?

By replacing the Christian spirit that animated Louis XVI's project with the spirit of philosophism and unbelieving philanthropy.

Henceforth, philosophism will lead and develop, as it pleases, the emancipation of the Jews. The satanic plan triumphs. If, in Book III of this work, we took so much care to discern and specify the elements of philosophism and its poisonous breath, it was to better conclude here what emancipation will become with such a guide. Here, then, is a breath impregnated and composed :

Voltaire's hates and slobber;

Rousseau's hypocrisies;

Encyclopédie's atheism;

The tolerances and defilements of the French salons;

The royal indulgences of Josephism;

The perfidious insinuations of English egoism;

And all the occult poisons of Masonry;

Here is the breath that will become, first in France, and then throughout the world, the inspiration and propagator of Jewish emancipation: we can foresee what this emancipation will be, and what will come of it. To put it more clearly, it was apostasy that opened the doors and avenues of Christian society to the Jews.

The public conscience, still Christian at the end of the last century, felt a kind of extreme unease and a terrible nightmare. Traces

of it remain in an uprising in Alsace. To the man experiencing the symptom of a nightmare, it seems as if an enormous weight has been placed on his chest, that a ghost is pursuing him, that a precipice is forming beneath his feet: and he makes useless efforts to evade the danger that threatens him. Alsace made these useless efforts. When Louis XVI thought of emancipating the Jews and appointed Malesherbes to deal with the matter, Alsace remained attentive and observant: it knew that the heir of Louis XIV would not sacrifice the interests of his good province of Alsace, and that the son of Saint Louis would not sacrifice the interests of the Christian people. But when the Revolution came to replace Louis XVI and continue the emancipation begun, the whole of Alsace shuddered and rose up. Its rugged, outspoken people sensed perfectly well that the breath of philosophism, replacing the Christian breath, was going to distort the royal enterprise and make it dangerous. Irritation was so intense that the National Assembly of 1790 was forced to issue a decree to protect Jewish life and property. Here is the decree (April 16, 1790):

The National Assembly places the Jews of Alsace and the other provinces of the Kingdom under the protection of the Law; forbids all persons to attack their safety; orders the Municipalities and National Guards to protect, with all their power, their persons and their property.

Alsace alone saw clearly when the emancipation project passed from the hands of Louis XVI into those of the Revolution!

The Fable recounts this fiction. When the Sun gave Phaeton his chariot to drive, he told him: "If you ascend too high, you will shine in the heavenly abode; if you descend too low, you will reduce the earth to ashes: stand between the two. "1

Louis XVI's project was this in-between. He would no longer leave the poor Jews in the iron furnace where they had suffered and atoned for so many centuries. But, on the other hand, he took precautions to ensure that when they entered Christian society, they would not become dangerous elements. The Revolution, on the other hand, will throw them headlong into this society, where they will contribute, through clumsiness as much as prejudice against Christianity, to the immense conflagration that will envelop the Christian

nations.

IV

A result as strange as it was unexpected, which would slowly emerge from the course of the Revolution: in reality, the Revolution would only benefit the Israelites. Gradual dissolution of the nations and gradual preponderance of the people of Israel. The explanation of this gigantic metamorphosis requires a sequel to this book.

The results will be as strange as they are unexpected.

The Revolution, in fact, which has a satanic character, copies and apes, as we said, the Almighty's way of doing things. It is written in the Bible that, in the beginning, the creative power played itself out in the formation of the globe.¹ The Revolution, which has announced itself as having to renew everything, recreate everything and start again, will parody this creative ease by also circling the globe.

But it has another particularly fearsome game in store, always modelled on divine action:

Indeed, it is written that the Lord is pleased to call often the humblest beings, the most despised, the closest to mud, to place them with the princes: He chose the weak to confound the powerful; he chose what was nothing to confound and destroy what is.¹ He overthrew the great from their thrones, and exalted the lowly.² Now the Revolution will do the same; it will displace the powerful and the princes to put them down, and put up not only the people, but the lowly people, the rabble. This game of the Revolution will be called by a characteristic name: the successive advent of new social strata. In this, it will accomplish a circular movement of prodigious power, since what was below will rise to the top, and what was above will descend to the bottom. In paradise on earth, the human race had emerged from the earth's silt: the Revolution has promised to re-immense it! All that is most muddy, most abject, not only silt, but manure, can be elected and acclaimed as an instrument of regeneration: a satanic game!

Now, among the various social strata whose ascent is about to begin, none had as much affinity and blended better with the loam of the earth as the despised Jewish race. We walked all over them. The vile Jews, it was said, are the scum and dregs of the human

race! But now, thanks to the Revolution, this race, this dregs, is going to start climbing; it's going up, up... and while it's climbing, all the Christian peoples, and with them Christian civilization, are going down. An unprecedented spectacle! It is, on the part of God's rival, the revenge of a prophecy and a judgment of Moses:

On the point of dying, Moses had announced to the people of Israel: If you listen to the voice of the Lord our God, the Lord will place you at the head of the peoples, and not at the tail... that if you will not listen to the voice of the Lord your God, you will be the plaything and fable of all the peoples,

they will be at the head, and you will be at the tail.¹

For a long time cherished by heaven and showered with its favors, Israel had been at the head of the human race; but, since it had refused to listen to Christ, the voice of the Lord its God, it had become the tail, and such was its place for nearly two thousand years! The Revolution put an end to this order of things. With satanic boldness, it overturns Moses' judgement: the Christian peoples will follow, and the Jewish people will lead!

By a kind of irony, the Revolution will take its time to accomplish this metamorphosis: master, it seems, of time as well as space. The monarchy, had it continued to lead the emancipation of the Jews, would have accomplished it, as we have seen, gradually, so as not to rush into anything or compromise anything. The Revolution would begin by doing the opposite: Israelites in France would be emancipated at once. But once emancipation had been proclaimed, the Revolution would take all the time it needed to accomplish the metamorphosis we have described, confident as it was of the result. It will gradually, slowly and skilfully bring about this double change, represented by the head and the tail: the dissolution of the Christian nations and the preponderance of the Jewish people.

Alas, as we write these lines, we can no longer speak of these things in the future: they are developing and continuing before our very eyes.

But how did such a strange reversal of fortune come about, and become an almost universal situation?

By virtue of what principles did the Jewish people begin to

ascend, and the Christian nations to descend?

And by what series of events was this perpetrated? This is almost universally ignored.

People in France and elsewhere have lost their memory. They seem to have drunk from the cup of slumber. Is it the effect of passions? They take away memory, from people as well as individuals. Is it punishment? Let's hope it's neither, and that the cause of this ignorance is the revolutionary whirlwind, which tires the mind and prevents reflection. When we do reflect, the Revolution will be close to ending. One of the last words spoken by the unfortunate Louis XVI in the Temple prison was this: The people will do justice to my memory when they know the truth, when they have recovered the freedom to show themselves just; but, alas! until that time, they will be very unhappy.¹ Our ambition, as well as the sweetest reward that could come our way, would be to have contributed a little, through the documents and reflections of this book, to the appearance of that truth for which the soul of the generous monarch thirsted, less for the vindication of his memory than for the cessation of the misfortunes of his people. As far as the Jewish question is concerned, we have tried to make this truth known, either by recalling the true situation of the Jews throughout the Middle Ages, or by revealing Louis XVI's magnanimous and prudent intentions towards them. All that remains is to shine a light on the strange situation that is dragging the Christian nations down, and the Jewish people up. If Divine Providence deigns to grant us the grace, the strength and the time, we will complete this task; if it prefers to give us a continuator, we bless in advance the pen that will do better than us.

V

The last stage in the life of the people of Israel as foretold in the Bible: it is to be a kingdom. May the memory of King Louis XVI's benevolence find its way here!

Historical truth in the Jewish question is all the more important as it is called upon to serve the designs of eternal Truth, announced in the Scriptures. Eternal Truth has said, through the mouth of the prophet Hosea: The children of Israel will be for a long time without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, without an altar: and after that, they will return and seek the Lord their God, and David their King.¹

Monarchy is therefore the final stage for the people of Israel: they will seek David as their king.

The divine Scriptures even specify the circumstances under which the children of Israel will make this resolution.

The prophet Azariah, in the second book of Paralipomenes, begins with words almost identical to those of the prophet Hosea: A very long time will pass, during which the children of Israel will be separated from the true God, without priest, without teacher and without law.

Then he adds:

But when, in the excess of their troubles, they return to the Lord God of Israel and seek him, THEY WILL FIND HIM. IN THESE TIMES, IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO COME AND GO SURELY, TERROR WILL BE ON EVERY SIDE AMONG THE EARTH'S INhabitants. Nation SC will rise against nation, and city against city, because the Lord will reduce them to extremity.¹

There are a number of Bible prophecies that are so transparent that they allow us to glimpse the events they foretell: isn't this one of them? It announces that, when the remnants of Israel wish to return under the scepter of the Son of David and seek him, they will be driven to it by the excess of their evils; and that at that time there will reign such terror, that one will not be able to come and go safely. Such a prediction vindicates what we pointed out (in chapter iv of Book II) about Hell's plan: that, in parallel with

the dissolution of the Saytian nations, Hell pursues, with the help of emancipation as achieved by philosophism, the perversion and perdition of the remnants of Israel. The Jews now dominate, and it is to be presumed that they will grow in power, until someone stronger than they come to dominate them, demanding of them not so much the abandonment of their wealth as the abandonment of their beliefs¹. Is there not already a forerunner of this demand in the radicalism and atheism which, by fostering the ancient hatred of the Jews against the Church, threaten them themselves in their patriarchal and Sinaitic beliefs? Come this stronger, come this demand, and the Israelites' indignant about-turn in favor of the Truth is explained; but so is the excess of evils that await them, and their wish to regain the scepter of the son of David... Let us not attempt to penetrate beyond these forecasts, authorized by Scripture and the most famous commentators, into the secrets of the future. What is certain, indubitable, and clearly inscribed in the pages of the Bible, is that a kingship, willed by God, will be the final stage for the people of Israel. Revolution, then, is not a stable state; it is merely a means which the Almighty has allowed, as he allows hurricanes and storms, and which he uses. Revolution is not a horizon for society; it is merely a tunnel. The horizon awaiting society on the other side of the tunnel will be the kingship of the Son of David: they will seek David their king, and they will find him!

In a memoir addressed to the Emperor of Russia in 1818, we read: "Israel is a royal nation" ¹ A remark as accurate as it is consoling!

In every phase of their existence, without exception, the people of Israel, whether they wished it or not, have depended on the monarchy: the circle of honor that encircled their actions! From the time they left Egypt until the end of the time of the Judges, it was the Lord himself who was their king: a privilege earned by the faith of their fathers, but of which the people grew weary;

So they asked Samuel to choose for them a king like that of the other nations. The Lord was saddened at first, for he said to Samuel: It is I they have rejected; then he added: Do as they ask and set up a king to rule them². A kingship similar to that of other nations was thus established in Israel; and the Lord, who remained

faithful to his fickle people, announced that the Messiah promised to the whole human race would come from the royal house of David;

Twenty-eight generations followed one another, and then the Messiah appeared;

When, at the foot of Pontius Pilate's Praetorium, the people rejected him, it was again in the name of royalty (always similar, alas! to that of other nations) that they committed their fault: We want no other king than Caesar;¹

Scattered to all winds and beaches, Israel remained a prisoner of the royal idea until its punishment. During the nineteen centuries of the Christian era, all the phases through which this people passed, exiles, recalls, confiscations, favors, in a word all the changes made in their state either for good or for ill, were invariably the result of the decrees of Emperors and Kings...

Finally, when the days of mercy dawn on the remnants of this people, days of mercy that will first be its civil emancipation, the preface, we must hope! to its religious emancipation or conversion, - it is King Louis XVI who prepares the civil emancipation.

O Israel, dear Israel, you have therefore been, in every phase of your existence, a royal nation, a satellite, voluntary or forced, of the monarchy. This being so, the most devoted of your sons who hope in destiny could do no better than to wish that they hasten to arrive, those times, when, giant of light and love, you will travel your most glorious stage seeking the Son of David, finding him, and having him recognized as King by astonished and trembling humanity!

In that time, may the memory of the good King Louis XVI receive, below the Son of David, the recognition due to him! There are still two precious relics on which we have had the good fortune to press our pleading lips, to begin the reparation:

In Rome, in the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, part of the title of the Cross, Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews;

In Paris, in the library of the national archives, the parchment signed by Louis XVI, announcing and prescribing that, since Jews are men, they will no longer pay the tax at the entrance to towns that equated them with beasts of burden.

Of these two precious monuments, the latter has restored honor

to the sons of Israel and paved the way for their entry into civil society; the former will restore faith to them, and will be their title of introduction into the Church of God. We have showered them both with our tenderest embraces. May many of Israel's children find, like us, the pleasures of repentance and gratitude!

